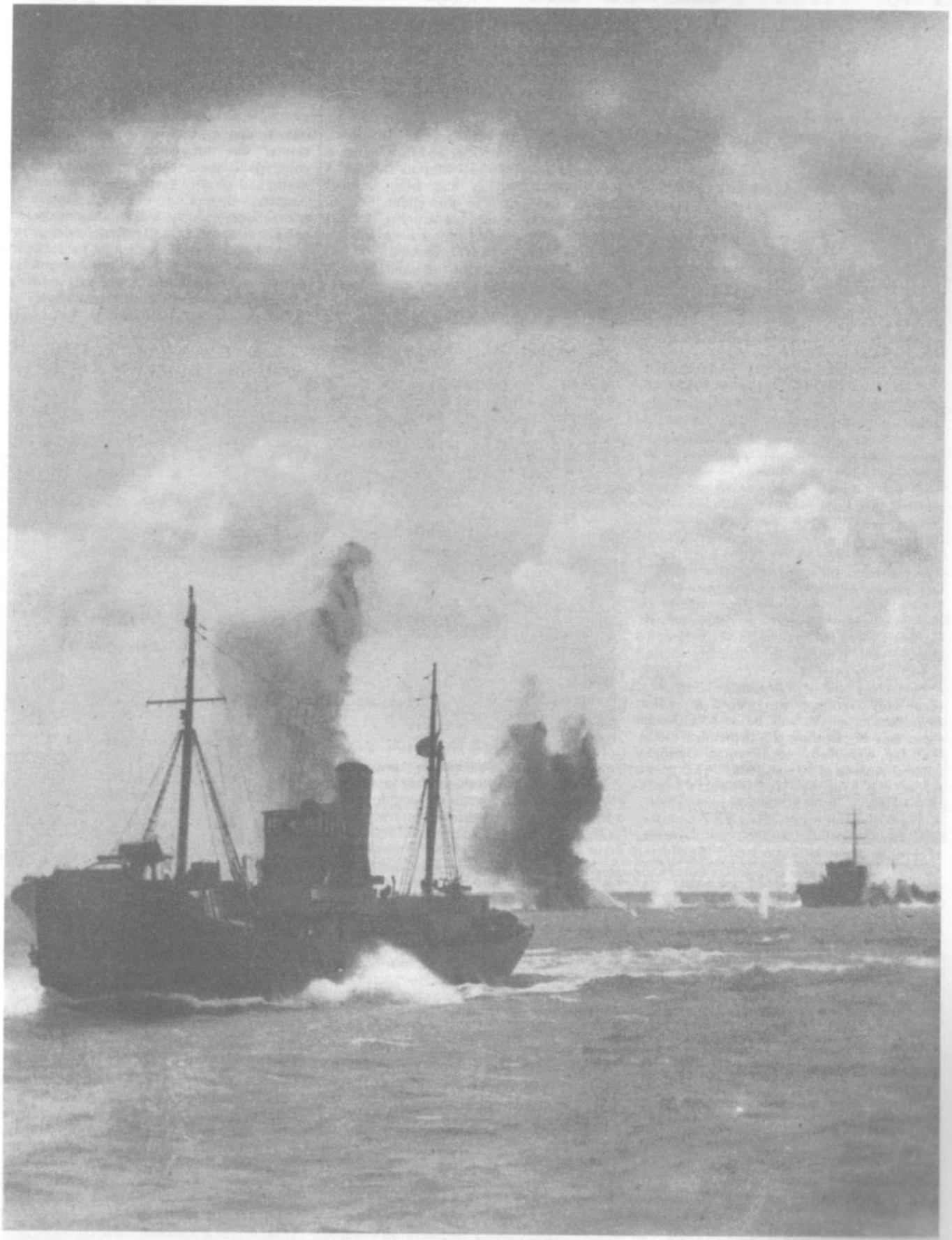


RUNNING THE GAUNTLET OF GERMANY'S CROSS-CHANNEL GUNFIRE

This small British merchant ship was among those in the convoy shelled in the Straits of Dover for the first time by long-range German guns from the French coast on August 22, 1940. Astern of her is a destroyer. It was estimated by observers that from 80 to 100 shells were fired, but the convoy kept on and not a single ship was hit. Later German 'planes flew over the convoy and dropped bombs, but these too missed their mark. *Photo, Keystone*

The First Year of the War Seen in Retrospect:

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

Now that the war has lasted for a year it may be well to review the strategical situations and developments which have marked its course. Here, then, is such a review, as authoritative as it is comprehensive, written by Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn, Military Critic of the "Daily Telegraph and Morning Post" and Joint Editor of "The Second Great War."

THIS war is one between a nation whose aggressive policy has committed it to offensive action and peace-loving nations who have relied on their power of defence and their superior economic position to wear down the resources of the aggressor.

At the outset, Germany's hopes lay in achieving rapid and decisive success. The Allies, for their part, were prepared to fight a long war, relying mainly on the stranglehold of the blockade and a steadily increasing development of their resources to secure a position which would enable them to dictate their terms.

Germany's advantage lay in that the initiative rested with her, that she could take action at her selected time, and that her opponents were so scattered that she could fall on the weaker while standing on the defensive against the stronger when and where it suited her purpose. Moreover, she had no scruples about attacking neutral countries if invasion of their territories would place her in a favourable position. The action of the Allies, on the other hand, was restricted by respect for the rights of neutrals and by scruples in the use of the air arm, which was the only weapon with which they could carry war into the enemy country. Germany was, therefore, well placed to employ both offensive and defensive action to further her designs.

A glance at the map of Europe shows how favourably Germany was placed to exploit her advantages. It will be seen, although there was no fighting till September 1939, that the war really began when Germany entered Austria in March 1938. That move turned the flank of Czechoslovakia's carefully-prepared defences. At Munich, in September 1938, she was induced to surrender her defences, and in March 1939 Germany occupied the whole country. Employing lies, Fifth Column activities and threats of ruthless air warfare, Hitler had thus achieved two strategic victories without striking a blow. Poland, which had been induced to take some part in the elimination of Czechoslovakia instead of coming to her assistance, was now exposed to attack. Hitler had thrown off the mask and his ambitions were revealed. Poland was to be his next victim. France and Britain decided that, even at the risk of a world war, they must call a halt to Nazi aggression.

But it was impossible to save Poland. Outmatched numerically and in armaments, she could also be attacked from three sides. Moreover, her industries on which her armament supplies depended lay in the most exposed part of the country. Her armies were stationed to defend them, right between the jaws of the German pincers. But the Poles relied on mobility and manoeuvre and no great fortified position had been constructed.

Without a declaration of war, Hitler launched his attack. In the first surprise the small Polish air force was wiped out by German bombers before it could leave the ground. Then German armoured divisions cut through the Polish armies or through the gaps between them. Infantry and artillery masses followed. The jaws of the pincers began to close, and retreat to escape them was inevitable. But orderly, well coordinated retreat was impossible. The German armoured divisions, closely supported by aircraft, had already penetrated deep into the country, disrupting the organization of control on which skilful manoeuvre in retreat depends. Confusion reigned in rear of the Polish armies, intensified by the action of parachutists who blew up bridges, cut telephone wires and damaged railways, aided by the large German element of the Polish population. The country was riddled with Fifth Columnists. Gallantly as the Poles fought—and their resistance at Warsaw was a memorable feat of arms—the end was inevitable. The Russian stab in the back eliminated the last hope that a remnant of Poland's armies might continue the struggle with their back to Rumania, through whom the Allies might have sent supplies.

General Hans von Seeckt, who commanded the small German Army permitted by the Treaty of Versailles and laid plans for its subsequent development on a grand scale; he died in 1936, before his machine could be launched. Top, Polish soldiers in action, in September, 1939.

Photos, Wide World and Planet News

Illustrating the Polish campaign of September 1-17, 1939, this map shows the direction taken by the principal German drives. As in France nine months later armoured and motorized columns, preceded by waves of bombing 'planes, blasted the road to victory.

Could France and Britain have saved Poland? The answer must be, No. Their armies, still unprepared, were confronted by the strongly fortified Siegfried Line, attacks on which would almost certainly have failed. Their air forces, though they

A Study in the Strategy of the Land Campaigns

might have reached Poland, could not have operated there for lack of equipped bases. To have attacked Western Germany would have involved initiating a form of warfare against which the Allies had set their faces, since it involved dangers to non-combatants. Moreover, German reprisals would have interfered with the development of French resources.

With the end of the Polish campaign a long lull set in during which only sea power remained active.

Hitler was not yet fully prepared for a life and death struggle with Britain and France. It is probable that he expected that the Allies would accept the *fait accompli* and give him a respite in which to prepare for his next move. The peace offensive which he launched to that end failed, however. He could, therefore, neither force the issue nor could he avoid it. Germany was feeling the effects of the blockade, and her own counter-blockade of Britain by submarines and mines was having no success. It was a situation which must have tested Hitler's nerve, but Dictators cannot draw back.

Hitler Makes His Choice

What were the alternatives open to him?

(1) He could stand on the defensive, hoping with the help of counter-blockade measures to wear down the determination of the Allies. That, however, meant sacrificing the initiative and exposing his people to long periods of hardships with no successes to buoy up their spirits.

(2) He might attempt to crush the morale of the British and French people by launching an unrestricted air attack on them. His air force, numerically, was still greatly superior to that of the Allies. There were, however, strong arguments against such a course. The German people would have suffered from reprisals. Damage, irreplaceable owing to the blockade, might be inflicted on German munition and other industrial establishments.

Moreover, air attack on Britain presented difficulties. She could be reached by bombers, but she was out of range of fighting aircraft, which experience had shown were necessary as escorts to bombers. Experience had shown, too, that the moral effect of bombing was often to irritate rather than to cow.

Most of the European countries engaged in the war of 1914-1918 were also involved in that which broke out in 1939, but (as this map makes clear) the alinement of the belligerents varied considerably. Only Sweden, Switzerland and Spain escaped the one war and (as yet) the other.

(3) Counting on the inability of the Allies to attack, he could wait to expand his army and air force, make good the wastage of the Polish campaign, and then, at his chosen moment, use his army and his air force combined in one desperate attempt to secure decisive victory.

When he decided on the last course we do not know, but preparations for it must have been put in hand with the greatest vigour from the beginning of the lull. The Allies could also, of course, use the lull to develop their strength; but, as we now know, they did not take full advantage of the opportunity. Worse still, the French lost some of their ardour during the months of idleness and, according to neutral observers, became obsessed with the idea that all that would be required of them would be the comparatively easy task of defending the Maginot Line. During the lull the invasion of Finland served to distract attention from the main arena, and the gallant fight made by the little

Hitler owed much of his rapid success in Norway, as elsewhere, to the Fifth Column, and all too seldom were the nefarious activities of the traitors nipped in the bud. Here French soldiers, forming part of the Allied Expeditionary Force, are marching off a batch to a concentration camp.
Photo, Service Cinématographique de la Marine

On Land the Rush of Mechanized Armament

Here is one of the German mechanized columns which, as described in this chapter, formed the spearhead of the German attack against the Allied flank on May 14. The heavily armoured German cars find that their progress is impeded by concrete barriers that narrow the track down until it is only a few feet wide. *Photo, Keystone*

Finnish army against desperate odds tended to encourage Allied confidence in the powers of defence.

Then came the invasion of Norway and Denmark. This may have been intended by Hitler to cause dispersion of the Allied forces; or it may be that he had not finally decided to risk a great offensive, and desired to have Norway as a base for counter-blockade measures in case he finally decided on a defensive policy.

In the event he acquired a useful asset, but probably at a higher price than he expected. The petrol and food supplies he looted were of immediate value to him, and he eliminated the possibility of Norway, under Allied pressure, becoming a less complaisant neutral. Although the venture had cost him dear, it certainly helped to strengthen Hitler's prestige as an invincible and ruthless conqueror.

Fortunately, the Allies decided not to throw good money after bad, but cut down their commitments in Norway when it was seen that it was hopeless to save her. If they had not done so they might have become involved in a side show that would have placed a heavy strain on their navies and shipping resources.

We now come to Hitler's Blitzkrieg, his great effort to achieve a rapid decision. Let us look at the weapon his General Staff had sharpened for him. It was specially designed for offensive action, though it could equally be used to parry.

General Von Seeckt, who organized the small army allowed to Germany by the Treaty of Versailles, made the original sketch of the weapon to be forged if and when the rearmament of the Reich became possible.

He visualized an army in two parts. First, a highly mobile, strongly armed spearhead, mainly composed of armoured vehicles, which by a rapid surprise blow might hope to penetrate the enemy's defences; it could then spread confusion in the enemy's rear, disrupting his system of command and seizing strategical points. Behind the spearhead would come the rest of the army, composed of slower-moving but powerful formations of infantry and artillery, which would enter and enlarge the gap and take advantage of the confusion.

Von Seeckt's successors accepted his basic conception and, when Germany rearmed, perfected it. To give power to the army, which all Germans had been brought up to look on as their main weapon, it was decided to use the air arm in close cooperation with it. Armoured vehicles are partially blind; aircraft could give them eyes. Armoured fast-moving vehicles could not bring with them sufficient guns and ammunition to crush well-entrenched positions; bombing aircraft could supplement deficiencies of artillery. Moreover, attack from the air, which troops on the ground find themselves unable to answer, produces moral effect much greater than that caused by the actual casualties it inflicts.

Rôle of Germany's Air Force

There was, however, of course, nothing to prevent the German air arm being used independently and ruthlessly if occasion made such use effective. But the German air force, with little time available for training during the process of rapid rearmament, specialized in army cooperation—not on air combat and navigation to the same extent as, for instance, did the R.A.F.

As a further aid to increasing the confusion caused by the rapid action of the mechanized spearhead, the idea of using parachute troops was borrowed from the Russians. It was used with effect in Poland and Norway; and, in the latter campaign, the situation necessitated the employment of troop-carrying aircraft. Those campaigns too showed that the idea of rotting the fibre of his opponents by propaganda and corruption, expounded in Hitler's "Mein Kampf," could play an immense part in strategy and increase the effectiveness of parachute troops.

That was the weapon, depending for its power less on new and powerful weapons than on the nice adjustment of its constituents for cooperation. How could it be used? The Maginot Line closed the French frontier, and evidently the German General Staff refused to risk blunting or breaking their weapon in a direct attack on it.

More neutral countries must be added to the list of Hitler's victims in furtherance of his plans if they refused to surrender their rights. And the Low Countries obviously stood in his way. Once again Flanders was to be the cockpit of Europe.

War in Europe's Cockpit

While the lull continued, the Low Countries had been useful to Germany as a source of supplies and as providing loopholes in the blockade. But if the war was to be won by a Blitzkrieg their value in that respect became of less importance. Instead, they were required to provide access to France and to furnish bases for air and submarine attack on Britain. There were, too, other considerations. If Holland and Belgium were invaded Hitler knew that a large portion of the Allied armies would move to their assistance, leaving the positions prepared with much labour on the Franco-Belgian frontier. It was true that Holland and Belgium had strengthened their own defences, but, in the hopes of maintaining their neutrality, they had refused to make any plans with the Allies as to the nature of the assistance they would require. Under these circumstances it was probable that the comparatively small and poorly-equipped Dutch and Belgian armies would suffer severely before help reached them; and that the Allies' contingent, drawn out of its defences, would be encountered under conditions of more or less open warfare—conditions for which the German army was specially trained and had had experience in Poland.

Invasion of the Low Countries and a frontal encounter with the Allied armies, while still on the move, formed the primary element in the German plan. But such an encounter might lead only to the orderly retirement of the Allies, reinforced by Belgian and Dutch troops, to prepared positions on which static warfare conditions would develop. A Blitzkrieg required a more decisive success. A successful withdrawal had, therefore, to be prevented and an attack in flank would obviously make withdrawal difficult. The Allies' flanks were, however, protected by the sea on one hand and by the formidable obstacle of the Meuse river on the other. East of the Meuse, too, Luxembourg and the Belgian Ardennes, hilly country with poor railway communications and few roads, presented obstacles to a mass flanking attack. A surprise attack by swift-moving and powerful mechanized formations might, however, find a weak spot. If such an attack succeeded, far-reaching results would be attained. If it failed, the main attack in the north could still go on and at the worst the German army could stand on the defensive, having at least secured bases in Holland and

In the Air Hordes of Terror-inspiring 'Planes

Belgium favourable for air attack on Britain. Such were the main features of the German plan to avoid desperate attacks on the Maginot Line.

On May 10 Holland and Belgium were invaded. The Dutch and Belgian troops fought gallantly, but mechanized divisions and air bombardment succeeded in making gaps in their lines. The Dutch fell back behind their main inundation defences and there they offered stout resistance, till airborne troops, assisted by Fifth Columnists, created an ulcer at Rotterdam in their rear. It was, however, the threat of reducing their towns to ruins by bombing attacks that caused them to lay down their arms. To show what they were prepared to do, the Germans had deliberately destroyed a large part of Rotterdam.

The Belgians also fought well, but the capture of a bridge over the Albert Canal, which formed their main line of defence in the north, compelled a gradual retirement to a second line running from Antwerp to Namur along the line of the Dyle. Perhaps the Germans, deliberately, did not press the pursuit with too great energy. Certainly they did not use their air force to any great extent to hamper the advance northwards of the Allies, who had at once responded to Belgium's call for help. By the fifth day of the invasion, therefore, the Allied armies, fully committed, were taking up their positions on the Dyle line. The junction of the defending forces had been accomplished, and there seemed fair prospects of stemming the German invasion.

Then, on May 14, the German flank attack was delivered; and for this the spearhead was used. Mechanized columns, which had been driving back the weak Belgian detachments in the Ardennes, appeared on the Meuse. At Sedan and Dinant vital bridges were captured undamaged; at Sedan especially there was an onrush of heavy tanks. The defence, surprised and demoralized by bombing attacks, collapsed. The spearhead had broken through.

The causes of the disaster are not yet fully known and need not be dwelt on. It is evident, however, that it was not solely due to the invulnerability of the new heavy tanks the Germans brought into action, for their vulnerability was subsequently established. Whatever the causes, demoralization spread; and the gap was widened and remained open. Armoured divisions poured through and, supported by infantry carried in lorries, swung rapidly westwards, cutting the communications of the armies in Belgium. In the confusion caused, the extent of the danger may not have been at once appreciated and there appears to have been some delay in ordering the retreat, obviously necessary. It may have been thought that the German thrust would spend itself and become immobilized owing to supply difficulties. Counter-attacks would then restore the situation. By living on the country, drawing petrol from roadside pumps, and by capture of depots, the spearhead, however, maintained its mobility and, encountering little opposition, reached the coast. The lorry-borne infantry, acting defensively, secured the corridor through which it had passed against weak counter-attacks. Where, we may ask, were the Frenchs reserves, especially mobile armoured formations which might have delivered a powerful counter-blow?

Opening on May 10, the Battle of the West swiftly extended over the Low Countries and Northern France. The principal drives are indicated above, culminating in the thrust to the coast at Calais which led to the retreat from Dunkirk.

Pressed from the north by the main German army, hampered by hordes of refugees, it was impossible for the armies in Belgium to cut a way through to the south. The story of the retreat to Dunkirk needs no repetition. Gallant fighting by all services saved the personnel of the B.E.F. But German strategy had won the day, though, man for man and weapon for weapon, the German army had no superiority.

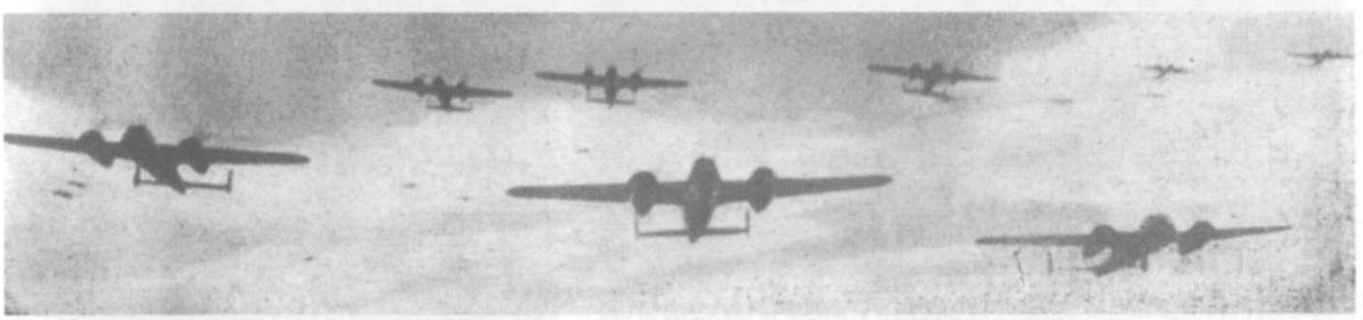
France Swept to Destruction

The success of the great coup, which probably exceeded German expectations, left the heart of France exposed to attack. She had lost a large part of her army, and almost all the assistance Britain could give her on land. Her prepared defensive positions had been overrun; the Maginot Line had not only lost its value but had become a subject for derision and recrimination. Italy was in her rear. Worst of all, her army and her leaders, political and military, had become demoralized. Germany gave them no time to recover. With amazing speed her army, in spite of its great exertions in Belgium, advanced south, sweeping away Weygand's attempts to organize resistance. France surrendered; and Britain, greatly weakened, was left standing alone. German strategy, German belief in offensive action supported by diabolic ingenuity and ruthlessness, German readiness to take risks, had triumphed.

Hitler might well have expected Britain to give up an unequal struggle, but Britain stood firm in her determination, not merely to defend herself, but, in the end, to destroy Nazidom. Her Island Fortress was manned and strengthened before Hitler could reorganize his forces. Her Navy tightened its stranglehold and included Italy in its grasp. Her Air Force performed prodigies in defending her shores and in carrying war into the heart of Germany.

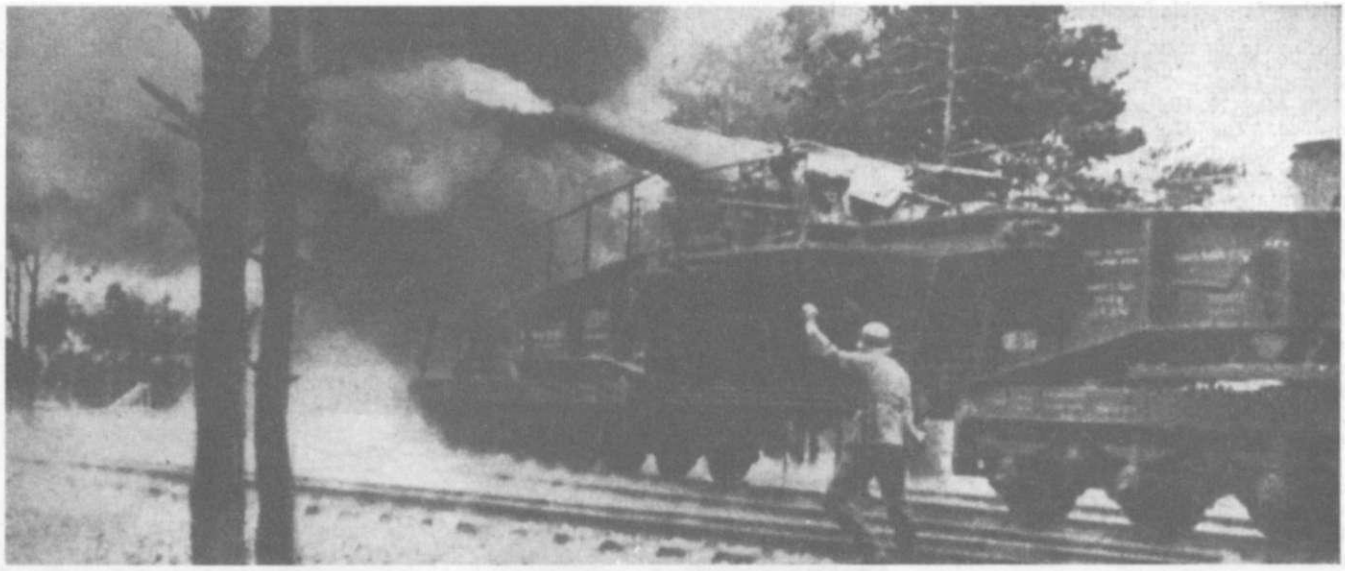
Hitler, after a year of victories, is faced by a new strategic problem, more difficult and involving greater risks than those which confronted him when he could use the whole strength of his army for the destruction of France. His army is halted by the sea. To send even part of it across involves tremendous difficulties and dangers. He must depend almost entirely on his air force to achieve the quick victory he needs. But his air force has met a formidable antagonist, one superior in combat and one that can carry warfare into the heart of Germany.

Can Hitler's General Staff find a solution to his problem before the stranglehold of Britain's Navy and the offensive attacks of her Air Force paralyse Nazi power?



In the lightning invasions of neutral countries which the Germans achieved in the first year of war, the Luftwaffe played an important part in acting as the eyes of the mechanized columns, as well as in spreading terror among the civilians. Above, German bombers are going into action in conjunction with the mechanized army. Preparation for this was the chief part of German airmen's training, to the neglect of air combat and navigation.

Undertones of War on the Western Front



For the first eight months of the Second Great War it was almost true to say that it was "All quiet on the Western Front"—certainly far truer than at any time between 1914 and 1918. There were artillery bombardments—our upper photograph shows a big German gun in action against the French lines—and on the one side and the other a state of constant alertness was preserved. The men on the right are poilus in the forward defences of the Maginot Line with their rifles trained on the opposite loopholes in the West Wall.

Photos, British Official, Central News, E. N. A., and Planet News

While they were waiting for the real war to start the men of the B.E.F. in France were kept at a high state of efficiency by divisional exercises, in the course of one of which the picture above was taken. When the shutter clicked for the photograph on the right, however, the war had started indeed—for the German soldiers prowling through a Belgian village and for the Belgians who were being "mopped up."

One Tremendous Year of History

by E. Royston Pike

An impressionistic survey by the Literary Editor of "The War Illustrated," who week by week throughout the year has described the course of the war and painted the background—historical and geographic, social and economic—against which the immense drama has pursued its earth-shaking course.

BEFORE their wireless sets, in castle drawing-rooms and cottage parlours, in club lounges and the bars of village inns, they grouped themselves—the men and women who remembered the last war. These were they to whom the joyous clatter of the maroons on November 11, 1918 had sounded deliverance; they had believed in their hearts that henceforth of a certainty there should be no more war. Since then twenty-one years had passed, and as they stood there they looked around on the children that the years had brought—looked at them for the first time with eyes of pity, half ashamed of the begetting and conceiving that had given them entrance into such a world.

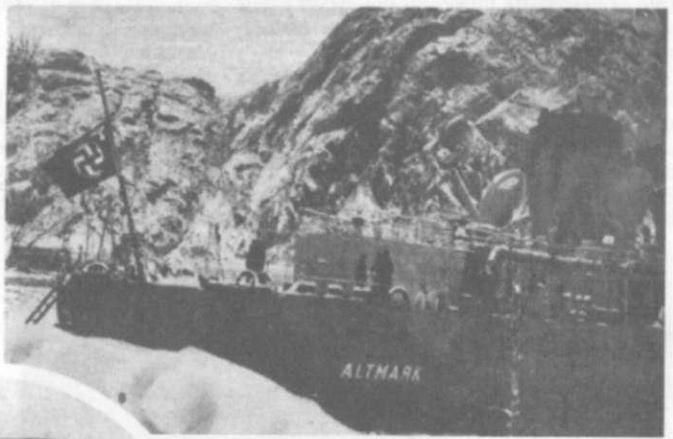
Into a silence that was almost too deep to be borne cut the sombre tones of Mr. Chamberlain's voice. He was sitting at his desk in Downing Street. "This morning the British Ambassador in Berlin . . . a final Note . . . unless we heard from them by 11 o'clock . . . war would exist between us. I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received, and that consequently this country is at war with Germany." Slowly the words so heavily charged with fate broke the stillness. "It is the evil things that we shall be fighting against—brute force, bad faith, injustice, oppression, and persecution. . . ."

The tension was broken, and with voices a little strained, perhaps, the flow of chatter was resumed. There was a clatter of knives and forks as they laid the tables for dinner. Behind the bars they were busy filling up the tankards of the men whose memories were of Gallipoli and the Somme.

Then the note of drama was sounded again. Above the medley of homely sounds and familiar voices wailed the shriek of the air-raid sirens. For a second or two they thought that it could not be true, but all doubts were dispelled by the blasts of the wardens' whistles. Swiftly they reacted according to their mood and circumstance. Some went out into the garden and scanned the skies. Some shepherded their little ones beneath the kitchen table. The streets were cleared for the most part by the bustling wardens and police, who looked more than a little self-conscious in their steel helmets. There was a steady troop of people into the air-raid shelters; and beside the buses parked along the kerbs the drivers and conductors exchanged their reminiscences of war.

After a few minutes another siren sounded, and the flow of life went on. The blinking crowds emerged from their subterranean refuges; the sky-gazers became conscious of their empty glasses; the suburban housewives rushed to see what the passing minutes had done to the Sunday joint. Life went on, but not as before. The war had begun, and that very night the waning moon splashed its cold light over the stricken "Athenia," first of the U-boats' victims.

For Poland's thirty-three millions the war had begun three days before, when at 4.30 on the morning of September 1 Hitler had launched his legions across her frontier. Already the Poles had experienced in large measure the pains and passions of war.



Germany's prison ship, the "Altmark," had almost reached home when on February 16, 1940, the prisoners heard the thrilling words, "The Navy is here!" This photograph was taken after the "Cossack's" daring attack.

From September 8-28, 1939, Warsaw, under the leadership of her stout-hearted Mayor, M. Starzynski, maintained a heroic resistance against the besieging Germans. Not until a large part of the city had been converted into a smoking shambles did Poland's capital surrender.

Photos, Julien Bryan and Planet News

One of the most striking of the many amazing victories won by the Finns over the Russians was that of Suomussalmi, where in the opening days of the New Year the Finns annihilated the 44th Division of the Red Army. Among the booty were 43 tanks.

Already their country was bleeding from a multitude of wounds. Within a few hours their air force had been driven from the skies or flamed to heaven in blazing ruin. On a front of some 1,600 miles her armies were putting up a most gallant resistance, but against the armed might of the invader the Poles were like a naked and weaponless man fighting a deadly duel with one completely armoured and armed to the teeth.

Yet nothing could daunt the natural valour of the Polish soldiers. They fought as the Poles throughout the centuries have always fought when defending their native soil against the invader. To the German tanks and armoured cars, to the roaring hordes of bombers, the Poles replied with the rattle of musketry; with fantastic bravery their horsemen charged the steel cavalry of the enemy. Thousands turned a deaf ear to the order to retreat, and died on the line they had resolved to defend to the uttermost; their comrades withdrew ever nearer to their country's heart, turning now and again to rend the foe with fury when he presumed too much on his superiority of arms and men.

For seventeen days the campaign in Poland continued, and then on September 17 Poland was stabbed in the back by Russia. Yet, even so, the Poles abandoned nothing but hope of victory. Warsaw, though completely surrounded, kept the Germans at bay for another ten days; and for weeks and months news trickled through to the outside world of bands of Polish soldiers and irregulars who had refused to lay down their arms.

And, though defeated, Poland never made peace. A year has passed since Hitler proudly boasted that the German Army had won a victory unprecedented in history, but a Polish Government is in London, and a Polish Army, having covered itself with glory in Norway and in France, forms part of the garrison of the British fortress. Polish airmen fly beside their British comrades; and in Poland itself the millions of Poles are living and working for the day of revenge.

While through those days of blazing September sunshine German and Pole were locked in combat, in the west France's great army was mobilized and took up its position in the Maginot Line—that monument of misplaced confidence, as a few

Broken by the Brutal Hands of Barbarians

months later it was proved to be—while Britain, all too slowly at first, set about the mustering of her mighty forces and resources. As in all the wars for centuries past the Royal Navy patrolled the seas and kept them open despite all that U-boat, surface raider, and mine could do. With the single exception of Eire all the family of nations who comprise the British Commonwealth rushed to stand side by side with Britain in the hour of her mortal danger. "We stand with Britain," said Australia's Prime Minister, and the same day, September 3, New Zealand joined her in declaring war against Germany. Three days later South Africa came into the war, with General Smuts once again at her helm; and on September 10 Canada, united as never before, ranged herself beside her sister nations. From the princes and peoples of India, from the islands of the Indies and of the southern seas, from the colonies and protectorates and mandated territories of Africa—from every corner of the Empire, from every people in the Commonwealth, sounded the answering note of passionate loyalty to the ideals which Britain, not for the first time in her history, had drawn the sword to defend.

While the war was still only a few hours old, men were rushing to enlist in the Empire's armies, and on September 12 it was officially announced that the vanguard of a new British Expeditionary Force had landed in France. Very different in many ways was the new B.E.F. from the old—how the "P.B.I." of 1914-1918 would have appreciated the motorized transport of 1939!—but the spirit of the men was as high and the reception given to them by the French people was as whole-hearted. Soon the men of khaki had taken their places at the front; and on them, in their billets and defence lines, descended the long months of winter—a winter marked by no event more exciting than a trench raid, a winter of rain and wind, of ice and snow and frost, more bitter than any within the memory of living men.

Glorious Battle of the Plate

It was indeed a miserable winter, one which exhausted the bodies and depressed the spirits of the millions on either side whom war had torn from their homes and settled occupations and flung into situations novel and dangerous. Only one ray of light illumined the December weeks, and that was composed of the funeral flames of one of Germany's much-vaunted pocket battleships. All the world outside Nazidom was thrilled by the story of the "Graf Spee," chased into the neutral harbour of Montevideo by Harwood's three British cruisers; all the world, including Nazidom, listened-in to Montevideo on the night of December 17 when the "Graf Spee," her wounds hastily patched, sailed out into the River Plate to meet her end. Some thought she would fight, some that she would surrender; few there were who had anticipated that inglorious end on a mud bank in the river, where the pride of Hitler's navy blazed and smoked into a tangled mass of scrap metal.

Only for a few days were men's eyes turned towards the sunny waters of the South Atlantic; for the most part during the weeks that closed the old year and opened the new their attention was riveted by the extraordinary struggle in the snows of Finland, where a little people defended themselves against the Russian colossus. In October, following his seizure of half Poland, Stalin had stretched out his hands to the three little Baltic republics, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and without any difficulty had converted them into puppet States. He tried the same thing with Finland, and, perhaps to his surprise and certainly to the world's, the Finns dared to resist him.

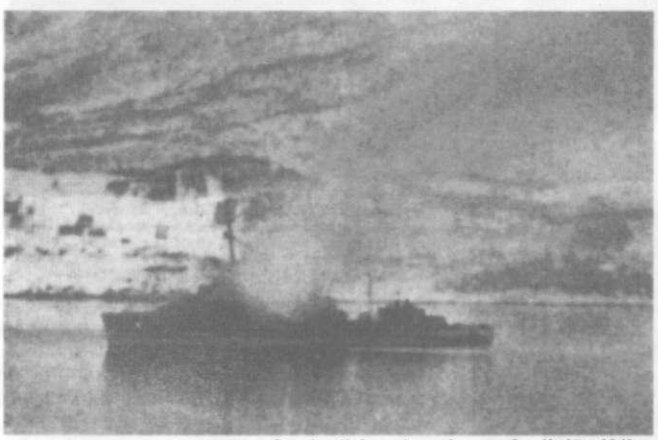
Outnumbered by twenty or thirty to one, with few 'planes and little mechanized equipment, the Finns maintained a resistance hardly equalled for heroism in the whole history of war. In "General Winter" they found a most puissant ally, and tens of thousands of Russians were wrapped by the snows of Finland in the sleep of death. Hundreds of 'planes were brought down by the Finnish marksmen; hundreds of tanks sank to disaster in the snowdrifts; villages with strange-sounding names sprang into fame as the battlefields where a few thousand of Finnish soldiers had defeated, nay crushed, the choicest regiments of the Red Army. On the Mannerheim Line in the Karelian Isthmus the Finns made a superb stand, and when at last it was outflanked rather than overrun, the military critics spoke somewhat pityingly of its planning and construction. The Maginot Line was so very much better . . .

At last Russia's uncountable hosts crashed their way through to victory. Finland submitted to Stalin's will. But never, so long as men continue to delight in deeds of bravery, will Finland's fight be forgotten.

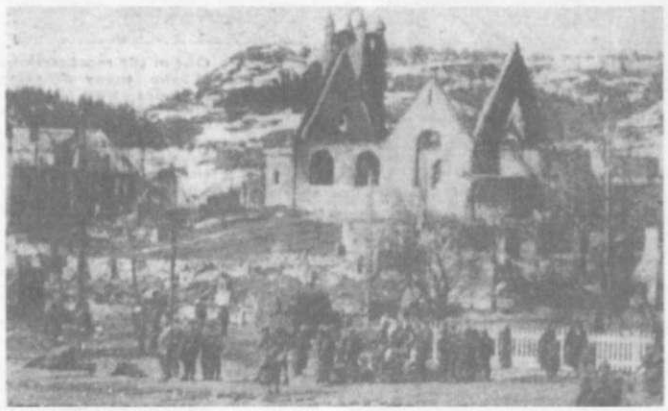
Finland's surrender was dated March 12, but still Scandinavia remained in the very forefront of the news. There was much diplomatic parleying—sometimes in not very diplomatic language—between the Allies and Norway concerning the use of Norwegian territorial waters by ships conveying Swedish iron-ore from the Atlantic port of Narvik to the German harbours. Once, on February 16, Britain's destroyers invaded Norway's waters and intercepted the "Altmark," Germany's prison-ship of infamous repute, which was conveying a number of British merchant-seamen as prisoners-of-war to Germany. The daring adventure was cheered to the echo at home and abroad, while Germany shrieked with unavailing rage.

Early in the next month—on April 8—the Allies mined Norwegian waters so as to bar the passage of Germany's ore ships, and the next day Germany retaliated with a move which had obviously been prepared long before, for the ships which disgorged their cargoes of armed men on to the quays of Narvik, Bergen, and Trondheim had already arrived in good time for zero hour.

So began the German invasion of Norway—one of the strangest incidents in a year full of strangenesses. A few hundred German soldiers marched unopposed into Oslo, and, while a military band kept the people quiet with martial music, occupied all the strategic points until



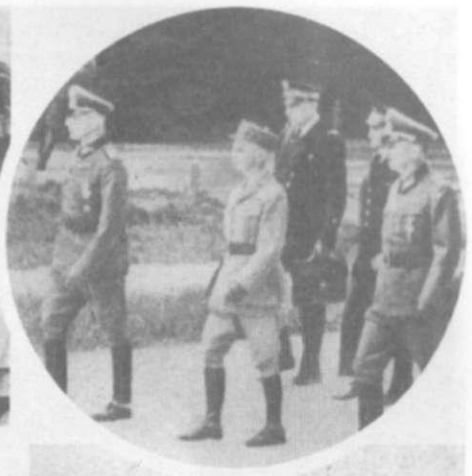
On April 9 and again on April 13, 1940, the British Navy struck at the German warships at Narvik. Here is one of the German destroyers that was set on fire.



After little more than a fortnight in Norway the Allied forces were withdrawn; this photograph shows British troops embarking at Namsos. Left, German soldiers hoisting the swastika flag over the palace of King Leopold of the Belgians at Laeken, near Brussels.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Central Press, and Planet News

Europe Will Be Saved by Britain's Example



In five days—May 10-14, 1940—the German invaders overran Holland. This German motorized unit is crossing the Maas by barge, the hatch-covers making a runway.

they could be strongly reinforced by sea and air. Too late the Osloans awoke to the fact that they had been bluffed into surrender; too late Norway as a whole realized her folly in not linking her fortunes with those of the Allies, relying instead on an out-of-date conception of neutrality.

Off the coast of Norway Britain's fleet, supported by Norwegian guns, took heavy toll of Hitler's navy, but the evil had been done. Thousands of German soldiers had entered the country, thousands more arrived day by day, and when the Allied Expeditionary Force landed at Namsos and Aandalsnes, they were not only opposed by an enemy immensely superior in arms and numbers, but from beginning to end they were subjected to an aerial bombardment as demoralizing as it was devastating. Landing in the middle of April, the British troops were withdrawn in the first days of May. It was an ill-conceived adventure. Not for the first time—and not, alas, for the last—Germany's opponents had taken action too late.

In Britain the news of the evacuation of the British troops from Norway was received with anger and disgust. Until but a day or two before the withdrawal the people had been buoyed up by hopes of victory based on the most extravagant reports received from neutral sources, which the British authorities, while not confirming, had done little to "debunk." When the truth became known the re-action was all the more violent. There were bitter speeches in the House of Commons, and Mr. Chamberlain's Government, already undermined by months of criticism because of its failure to grasp the realities of a great and grim situation, tottered to its fall. On May 10 it crashed, and other and greater things crashed with it, for on that day the Nazis invaded Holland and Belgium.

Churchill, Man of the Hour

While on this side of the North Sea Britain girded up her loins under the inspiring leadership of Winston Churchill, Hitler's war machine crashed its way across the dykes and fields, through and over the towns, of the Low Countries. Holland's resistance lasted a mere five days, but in those five days the Dutch did all that brave men could do. Only when the heart of Rotterdam had been made a shambles by squadrons of Hitler's bombers, only when the whole of the Netherlands had been converted into a battlefield in which the invaders were all too ably assisted by Fifth Columnists and parachute troops dropped from the skies, only when a quarter of her little army had fallen on the field of battle—only then did Holland sue for peace.

In Belgium the struggle was more prolonged, for King Leopold appealed for help to Britain and France, who immediately denuded their fronts in France by rushing divisions to his aid. On the very first day of invasion the British Expeditionary Force crossed into Belgium, and a few days later was in action beyond Louvain. But in the French sector there were "incredible mistakes," and when the German armoured divisions poured in an uninterrupted flood across the Meuse the Allies in Belgium were forced to retreat. For days there was a veritable welter of battle, a confusion of warring columns, one vast morass of tragedy. Along roads packed with a populace fleeing in terror from the German bombers, British and Belgians and French strove to maintain a fighting front.

On June 21, 1940, France's delegates arrived at Compiègne to negotiate their country's surrender (circle). Just before France's capitulation Italy declared war; in the lower photograph an Italian warship is in action against the British squadron on July 9. *Photos, Keystone and Associated Press*

But the Germans hit hard and even harder. On May 28 Leopold of the Belgians ordered his men to lay down their arms, and with the French armies on their right verging on collapse, the British retreated to the coast in a desperate bid for survival. From Dunkirk from May 30 to June 4 a motley armada snatched the khaki army from the very jaws of the German pincers. The B.E.F. lived to fight another day, but with the loss of all its equipment. It was indeed, as Mr. Churchill said, both a miracle of deliverance and a colossal military disaster.

Still all was not lost in France—at least, so it seemed. On May 19 Weygand supplanted Gamelin, and with pathetic faith the French trusted him to work that miracle which alone could save their country. On the Somme and Aisne the old general endeavoured to form a line of resistance, but the new type of war in which the armies were engaged demanded too much of brains which had learnt little since 1918. The tide of German victories was unstemmed. On June 14 the Germans goose-stepped through Paris, and on June 21 France's plenipotentiaries sat in the railway coach at Compiegne where 22 years before Foch had dictated terms to a defeated Germany.

Now it was France's turn to taste the bitterness of defeat, and Hitler saw to it that France's cup of misery and humiliation was filled to overflowing. Just before the final capitulation of France as a military power, Mussolini deemed the moment opportune for intervention, and in the streets of Mentone his troops won what he, at least, described as a great and glorious victory.

In nine months Poland had been conquered, Norway overrun, Denmark seized, Holland subjugated, Belgium crushed. Now France was flung on the altar of sacrifice. Under Pétain and the men of Vichy she bowed to every German demand. At the old Marshal's behest no opposition was forthcoming from the French colonies, and even France's Navy would have passed into Germany's possession if it had not been put out of action or seized by the navy of the country which until so recently had been her firm ally. The battle of Oran on July 3 was perhaps the year's saddest day.

On the continent of Europe Hitler now strutted as the greatest conqueror of all time. Only Britain stood out against him. So, as the first year of war drew to its close, against Britain the Fuehrer discharged his fleets of bombers and fighters, while along the 2,000-mile coast from the North Cape to the Pyrenees he plotted and prepared for that invasion which he confidently predicted would bring Britain to her knees. Alone she stood against a continent in arms. And yet not alone, for beside and behind her were grouped the mighty nations of the English-speaking world. There was never a false note in her trumpet-blast of defiance. "We stand on the road to victory," said Mr. Churchill in his magnificent oration in the House of Commons on August 20, and "we mean to reach our journey's end."

'Mid Falling Bombs London's Firefighters Go To It

The City of London experienced its first air raid of the war on the night of Saturday-Sunday, August 24-25, 1940. A number of high explosive and incendiary bombs were dropped, and a big fire was started in a warehouse block which received a direct hit. The fire was prevented from spreading by the London Fire Brigade and the A.F.S. This spectacular photograph was taken when the raid was still in progress. This was the first real test under war conditions of the A.F.S., and they behaved as seasoned firemen. A particularly high tribute was paid to the A.F.S. women and girls, who "stuck to their posts like heroines."

Photo L.N.A.

London is Bombed by Stealthy Night Raiders

Owing no doubt to the heavy losses it had sustained in mass attacks on Britain, the Luftwaffe first reverted to sporadic raids and then cautiously combined these with operations by larger formations. Still the losses of Nazi pilots were enormous, so the Nazi airmen came in at night by stealth, and on August 24 the first bombs fell on Central London.

In the third week of August the Luftwaffe again changed its tactics and resumed mass attacks by day, though sporadic "hit-and-run" raids were not abandoned. In what proved to be the first of a series of night raids on London the Nazis, during the night of Thursday, August 22, dropped bombs on several outer suburbs. The next night, for the first time, bombs fell on Central London.

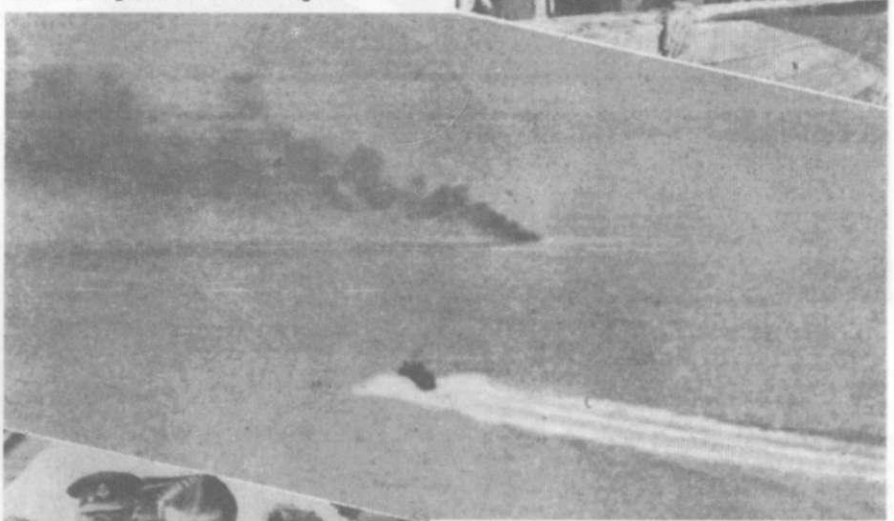
Another notable change was that the enemy no longer made any pretence of confining his raids to objects or places of military importance. By night there might be some little excuse for him, owing to the efficient blacking out of our towns; but even by day, when he could quite clearly distinguish his targets, he dropped bombs on churches, cinemas, blocks of flats, working-class houses and similar objectives, the destruction of which could not possibly aid him directly in waging the war.

On Wednesday, August 21, the Nazis made mainly for our aerodromes, where only slight damage was caused. Two dive-bombers attacked a town in the South-east. The first dropped screaming bombs that did little harm; the second launched a torpedo, and eight houses out of a row were demolished. In a raid on a Midland city several bombs dropped in close succession and killed and injured a number of people, including children. When a Dornier bomber was shot down two of the crew surrendered to farm workers; the third was captured by the wife of a Home Guard, who ran to the scene with her boy of 14 (he snatched up his father's rifle as he went). In the evening the raiders again attacked R.A.F. aerodromes, but few ventured far over the coast.

Soon after midday on Thursday, German coastal guns bombarded a British convoy in the Channel, but no ship of the convoy or escort was hit. Later the convoy suffered aerial attack, but our fighters engaged the raiders and drove them off, shooting down one machine. Elsewhere few enemy aircraft crossed our coasts and no bombs fell on land.

In the early morning of Friday bombs were dropped by single raiders on London suburbs. In one locality, where ten bombs fell, a cinema was wrecked. Fires were caused in houses where other bombs fell, but the A.R.P. services soon got everything well in hand. Delay-action bombs were used by the enemy. Strangely enough, in another raided suburb some miles away another cinema was destroyed. In this district five bombs had fallen close together, yet comparatively little damage had been done and not one fatal casualty was reported.

The Sergeant-Pilot of a "Spitfire," who had to bale out after shooting down a bomber and came down in the Channel, is here being brought ashore in a rowing boat.



Here a motor boat is going all out to attempt to rescue the crew of a German bomber brought down into the sea in flames. Left, an injured German airman is being helped on his arrival in London.

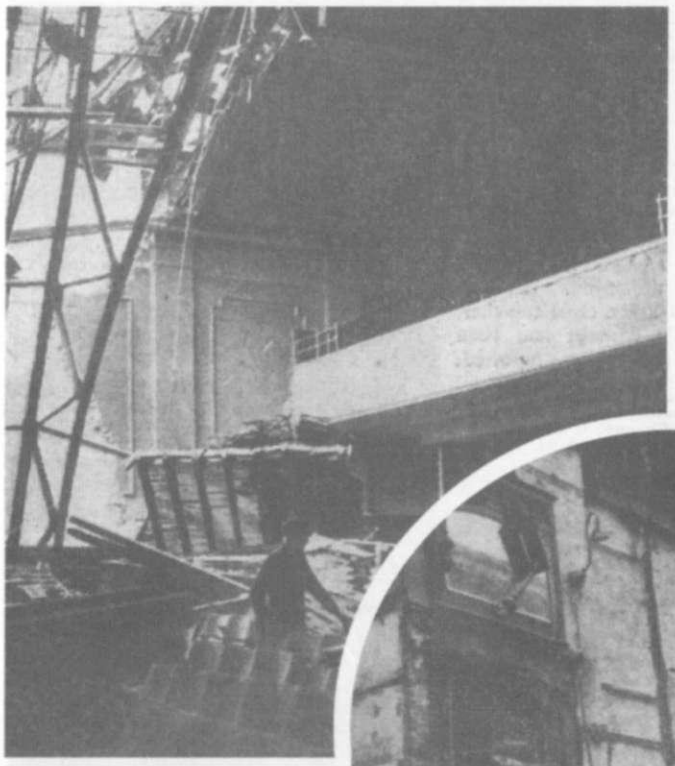
During Friday various parts of Britain were raided by solitary bombers in what seemed to be pointless operations. Murderous machine-gun fire was opened on people on beaches and others in the streets. Late at night a few bombs were dropped on the outskirts of London but caused no casualties.

Saturday was an eventful day that ushered in a week-end packed with incident. After shelling Dover from the French coast in the

This photograph shows Folkestone as it appeared when seen from the east on August 26, 1940. About noon on that day enemy aircraft dropped many bombs on the town, destroying houses on the sea front.

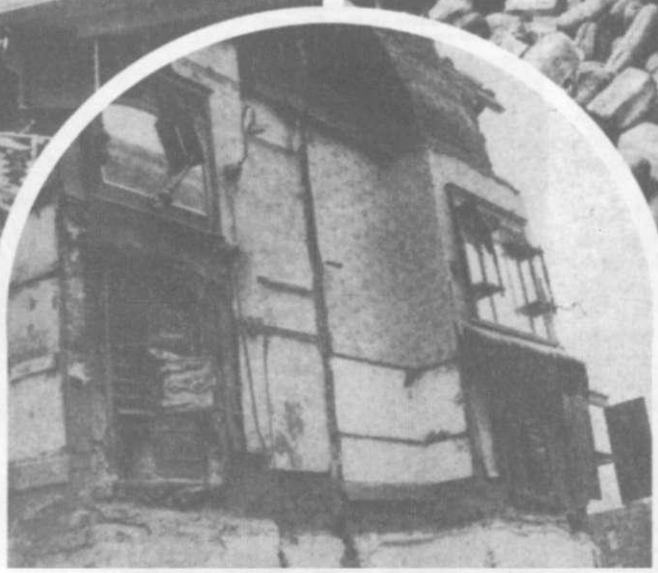
Photos, Planet News, Keystone and Fox

While Nazi Raiders Over Britain are a Nuisance



The seats of this cinema in a London suburb were smashed to fragments when a bomb wrecked the building during a night raid on August 22.

London's six-hour raid on August 27 was the first of the Nazis' "nuisance" raids. Here is a baker's premises which were damaged. Employees hurriedly left and the loaves were spoiled.



This house was demolished in the raid on London on August 25, only one wall being left standing. Two fireplaces are all that now remain of an Englishman's home.

Photos, Keystone & Fox

morning the enemy made an aerial attack on the town, doing little damage. Then Ramsgate was very heavily bombed, entire rows of houses being demolished. The local gasworks was set on fire, and after firemen had got to work on the conflagration the raiders came back again to machine-gun them. Ramsgate, like a neighbouring resort, has contrived spacious shelters in tunnels through the chalk beneath the town. Here some 60,000 persons can take refuge quickly and in security. At Manston aerodrome, near Ramsgate, considerable damage was done to buildings by raiders. Another R.A.F. aerodrome also was attacked and persons killed.

At Portsmouth, several working-class and residential districts were very severely bombed and hundreds of people rendered homeless. The attack was made by forty aircraft which were so harassed by our defences that they dropped their bombs indiscriminately over a wide area. In the main shopping district of Southsea, near by, scores of windows were blown out. People in a Portsmouth cinema had a narrow escape when a direct hit wrecked the building; the roof and gallery fell in, but most of the audience had left when the sirens sounded and only eight persons of the few left were killed. In raids on a south-eastern area "Molotov's bread-baskets" filled with incendiary bombs were dropped.

At 8.30 a.m. and again at 3.30 p.m. the sirens sounded in the London area, but the raiders got only as far as the outskirts. Half an hour before midnight there came another warning, after two bomb explosions had been heard near the central area. A screaming bomb fell on a large commercial building in the City. Flames rose 150 feet high from the fire that resulted, and soon the intense heat had set other buildings ablaze near by. The glow could be seen for miles, and it was an hour before the outbreak could be got under control by a large force of regular and A.F.S. personael.

From adjoining buildings jets were directed on to the main blaze through broken windows, and the steady work of the fire-fighters began to take effect. The City church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, was struck by a bomb which blew in part of the wall and damaged the windows. A statue of Milton outside was overturned. Another bomb fell in the quadrangle of an L.C.C. block of flats and did no harm. In a suburb another large fire was caused when a factory was hit by incendiaries. A group of houses across the road became involved, but the occupants were taken to shelters and no one was hurt. Smaller fires broke out after hits by incendiary bombs, but prompt action soon got them under control.

The behaviour of the people called forth the highest admiration.

On the following Monday everyone went about his business with coolness and a determination that Hitler's terror-tactics should fail. But, stung by this indiscriminate bombing of centres of population, people began to ask when Berlin's turn would come.

More massed attacks by day were made on Sunday, August 25. A force of eighty bombers and fighters tried to come in over the Dorset coast, but were driven off with heavy losses. At least 24 enemy machines were shot down.

GERMAN & BRITISH AIRCRAFT LOSSES

German to April 30, 1940

Total announced West Front, North Sea, Britain, Scandinavia	195
Unofficial estimate of additional 'planes damaged in Norway...	200

	German	British
May	1,990	258
June	276	177
July	245	115
Aug. 1-27	1,022	282
Totals, May to Aug.	3,533	832

DAILY RESULTS, August 1-27

	German Losses	British Losses	British Pilots Saved
Aug. 1-7	10	15	—
8	62	18	3
9	1	1	0
10	1	4	0
11	66	29	2
12	62	17	1
13	78	25	10
14	31	11	2
15	183	34	17
16	180	37	17
17	1	0	—
	675	191	52

	German Losses	British Losses	British Pilots Saved
Bt.fwd.	675	191	52
Aug 18	152	22	12
19	5	6	2
20	7	2	1
21	13	1	1
22	10	4	2
23	4	0	—
24	50	21	12
25	55	17	3
26	47	17	11
27	4	1	—
Totals	1,022	282	96

Notes.—The main attack on Britain began on Aug. 8—up to the 27th there were 13 mass attacks.

None of the figures include aircraft bombed on the ground or so damaged as to be unlikely to reach home.

On Aug. 20 the Air Minister stated that Germany had lost **701 aircraft** since Aug. 8, in attacks on Britain, with more than **1,500 personnel.** By Aug. 27 German losses had increased to **1,012 machines** in 20 days. Our A.A. guns had shot down many more German raiders than had been expected. British losses in the period Aug. 8-27 were **267 aircraft** and **186 pilots.**

Britain's Bombers Carry the War to Berlin

After the air raid on London on August 24 the cat (left) returned to a wrecked warehouse next day. The rabbit was a survivor of August 22, when its owners' home was destroyed.

Another formation bombed the Scilly Isles, one person being killed.

Twelve Spitfires, in a battle over Portland, during which 43 raiders in all were shot down, accounted for a dozen of the enemy—three Do 17s, six Me 110s and three Me 109s. Ten pilots returned to their base ; of the remaining two, one baled out safely and the other was picked up by a steamer. Magnificent work was done also by a Hurricane squadron —six Messerschmitts shot down and three others shattered. Another Spitfire squadron shot down six Messerschmitt Jaguar fighter-bombers, part of a force that came over in waves, three and a half miles up in the air.

Night attacks were made over a wide region in the South and also in the Midlands —where for several hours waves of bombers came over. Hundreds of incendiary bombs were dropped, but little damage was done except to house property. Bombers reached the outskirts of London, and a few bombs were dropped ; little damage was done. In all fifty-five enemy aircraft were shot down on Sunday.

The R.A.F. bombed military objectives in the Berlin area during Sunday night, but the Air Ministry was careful to make it clear that this—the first bombing raid on the enemy capital—was in no sense a reprisal for the bombing of London. The next night (August 26-27) selected military objectives again were attacked, though poor weather conditions hampered our pilots. A.A. batteries and searchlight concentrations on the outskirts of the German capital were bombed also.

While the R.A.F. bombers were thus carrying the war into Germany the enemy on Monday made his biggest and longest night raid on Britain. Sounding at 9.30 p.m., the London sirens sent people into shelters, and not till nearly four o'clock on Tuesday morning was the " Raiders Passed " signal heard. For six hours bomber after bomber, flying very high, tried to get through to the capital. Bombs were dropped on the outskirts of Central London, and in outlying districts. Three raiders were shot down, and little damage was done. The night attacks were widespread, raiders coming in along a 500-mile stretch of coast.

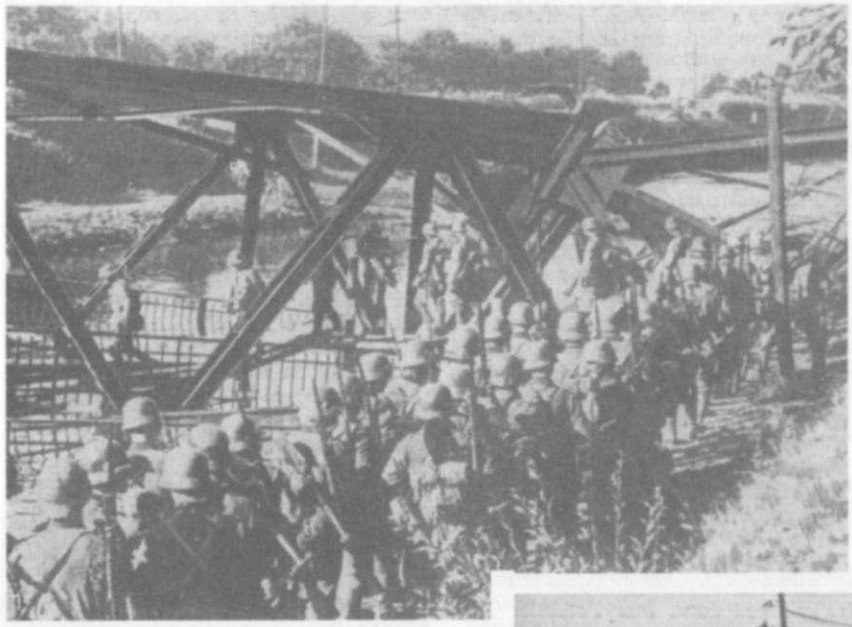
Earlier in the day London had had another warning, when raiders tried to approach by the Thames Estuary, but were engaged and scattered by our fighters. On Monday afternoon three waves of enemy aircraft had attacked along the S.E. coast. Some tried to destroy the balloon barrage at Dover, while others swooped down over Folkestone and dive-bombed at a low level. Essex and Sussex were attacked by raiders coming over the Thames Estuary. Another wave, late in the afternoon, concentrated on Portsmouth. In all areas the enemy was repulsed with heavy losses by our fighters. Forty-six raiders were brought down, with the loss to the R.A.F. of 15 machines (11 pilots saved).

Though small formations of enemy aircraft came over the Channel coast on Tuesday, August 27, few ventured far inland ; three were shot down. At night London had two warnings—at about 9.30 and again a little after midnight. The raiders were checked at the outer defences and mostly jettisoned their bombs. A few incendiary bombs fell in the London area and did little damage ; there were no casualties reported. On every hand it was clear that the raids had merely stiffened the Londoners' morale. In most places of amusement artistes and audience helped each other to while away the hours until the " Raiders Passed " sounded. Railway and road transport held back their services so that belated passengers might get home in time, after a brief respite, to take up anew the day's war effort.

These anti-aircraft gunners of a battery in England are examining with justifiable pride evidence of their success. The mass of tangled wreckage is the remains of a Dornier bomber which they brought down with their first shot when it was about to drop its " eggs " over England.

Above is one of the houses at Ramsgate that was practically destroyed on August 24, when about 250 bombs were dropped on the town. But Ramsgate has one of the finest air raid shelters in the country. Three and a half miles of tunnels excavated in the chalk on which it is built, provided refuge for 11,000 people, but there was room for well over 40,000 more. Right is an undamaged shelter behind a house at Portsmouth : the house was destroyed by a bomb on August 24. The raiders bombs have not affected the famous dockyard. *Photos, Fox, Topical, Central Press, Planet News and G.P.U.*

For Centuries to Come These Episodes Will Recall the Opening Year



Across the Channel Whined the German Shells

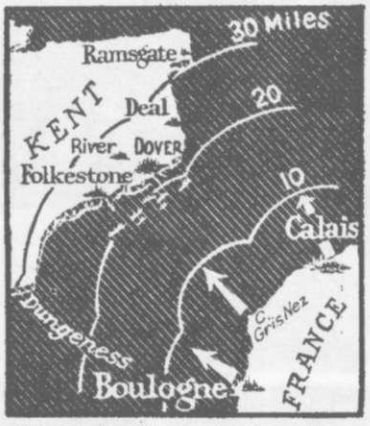
For the first time in her history England was shelled from across the sea when in the course of the battle of August 1940 German guns, mounted on the French coast not far from Calais, bombarded not only a convoy of merchantmen passing through the Straits but the land in the region of Dover.

THE first shells to arrive on British soil from across the Channel killed two A.R.P. workers and wrecked some houses in the Dover area on the morning of August 13. At first it was thought that bombs had been dropped—a reasonable supposition enough in view of the hundreds of bombs which had been unloaded on the South-east coast for days and weeks before—but as no aeroplane had been seen nor had the noise of falling bombs been heard, it was concluded that not bombs but shells were responsible. This view was supported by the metal splinters picked up, as these resembled shell fragments rather than bomb splinters.

A few days later all doubts were removed when German heavy guns established in emplacements on the French coast not only shelled a convoy of eighteen merchantmen steaming up the Straits of Dover, past "Hell's Corner," scene of some of the greatest of German air raids, but later in the same day bombarded the Dover area.

"Shortly before noon today," read an Admiralty and Air Ministry communiqué issued on August 22, "one of our convoys in the vicinity of the Straits of Dover came under fire from heavy guns mounted on the French coast. The warships escorting the convoy at once laid smoke screens to conceal the convoy from the enemy. Although some shells fell fairly close to ships, no ship of the convoy or escort was hit or received damage."

Firing from a distance of some 20 to 23 miles, the German guns bombarded the ships as they passed through the narrowest part of the Channel from near Folkestone to opposite Dover harbour. Groups of people assembled on the white cliffs of Kent saw the flashes of the guns coming from the French coast, and a few seconds later watched huge fountains of water spurting around the ships, followed by the sound of terrific explosions, which shook the very ground. As mentioned in the communiqué, the escort ships shielded their charges with a dense smoke screen, and the eighty or a hundred shells fired in the course of an hour or so failed to reach their target. In any case, as naval experts pointed out, it is exceedingly difficult to hit a target moving on the sea at such a distance.



The Straits of Dover, showing regions within the range of guns at Calais, Cape Gris Nez, and Boulogne.
Courtesy of the "Daily Telegraph"

About 9 o'clock that evening the German guns opened fire on the English coast. The bombardment lasted for nearly three-quarters of an hour, and was opened by a salvo of three shells, which screamed their way across the narrow Channel and crashed into some buildings behind the sea-front of Dover, throwing up a column of sparks and debris. Other shells followed in quick succession.

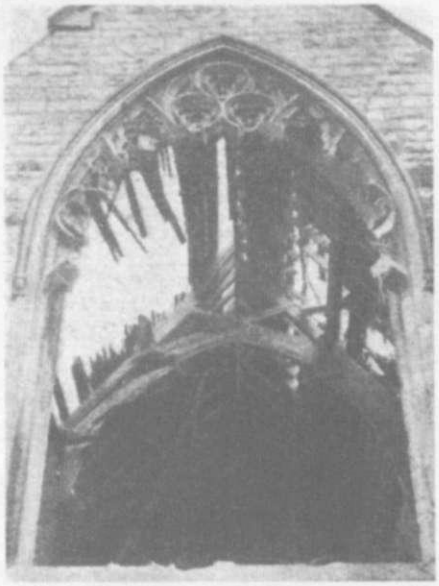
But hardly had the shelling begun when R.A.F. bombers took the air and in a few minutes were subjecting the German batteries to a tremendous aerial bombardment. Those who were watching from the Kent coast saw numerous flares coming down the sky, streams of orange shells or "flaming onions," and white flashes as of bombs bursting. Hardly a sound could be heard across the 20 miles of intervening water, but the flashes and bursts, and the German searchlights excitedly probing the night sky, proved beyond a doubt that the gunners across the sea were not having at all a nice time.

The first of the British bombers was over its objective—somewhere in the neighbourhood of Cape Gris Nez between Calais and Boulogne—soon after 9.30, and others took up the attack at intervals until 3.35 a.m. High-explosive bombs and incendiaries were dropped at Cape Gris Nez and at battery positions located near Audembert and St. Ingelvert in the same area—and this despite intense anti-aircraft fire from the German guns as the British 'planes approached the French coast. On the next night the R.A.F. were up above Cape Gris Nez again with a force of medium bombers, and they repeatedly bombed the gun positions from heights ranging from 10,000 to 4,000 feet; and their visit was repeated on the night of Sunday, August 25. The Germans, for their part, also continued their spasmodic shelling of the Dover region, with resulting damage to property and some loss of life.

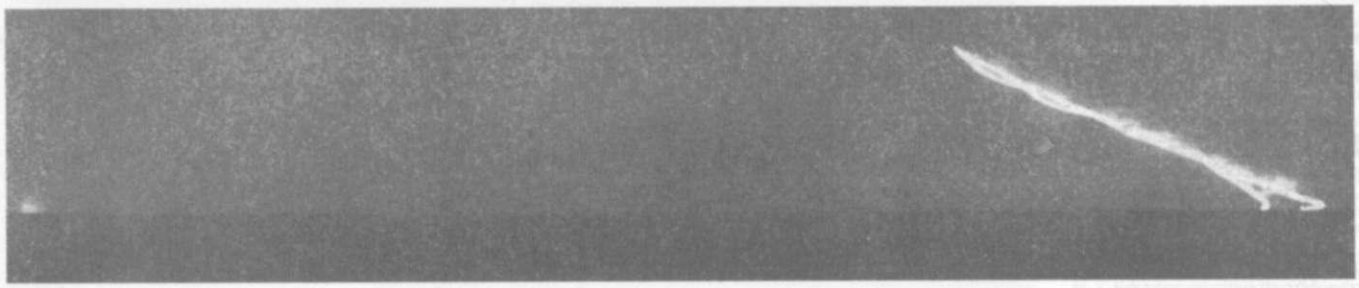
Some military experts expressed the opinion that the Germans were using guns of about 12-inch calibre, firing them from emplacements set a few miles from the coast; possibly the guns themselves are on railway mountings, so that after firing they can be moved back into camouflaged security. Others went further and suggested that they were 15-in. or 14-in. French guns from the Maginot Line—guns which had been primarily designed for shelling German towns in the Saar and Rhineland at a distance of 20 to 30 miles, although so far as is known, and for whatever reason, they were never actually fired. In any case they are not "freak" guns, such as was "Big Bertha," the gun which, throwing a shell of 9·1-in. calibre of stream-line shape, shelled Paris towards the end of the last war at a range of nearly 75 miles.

Nor are the Germans alone in being able to fire across the Channel, for it was revealed that on the same day as the convoy ran the gauntlet of German shell-fire in the Straits of Dover, British gunners fired a few rounds at the German positions near Calais.

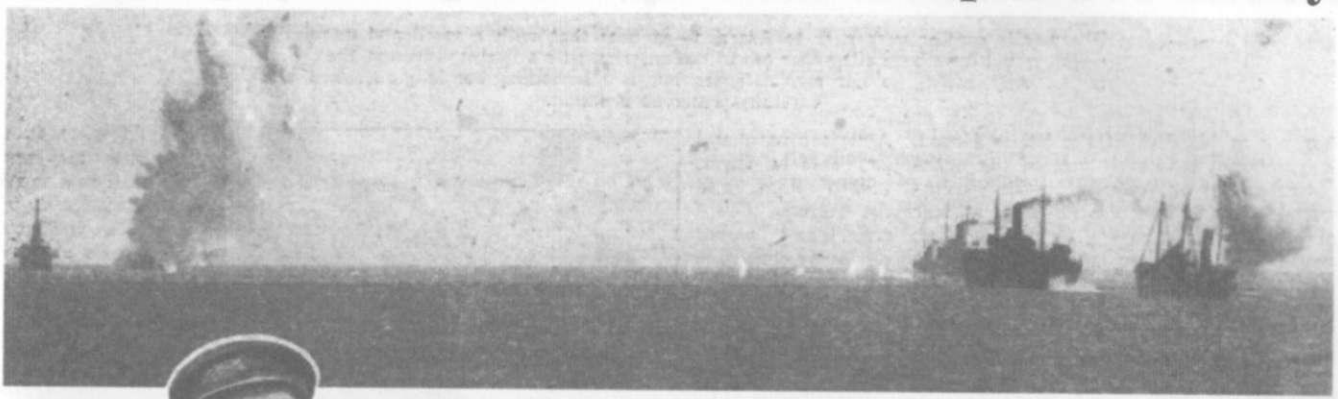
Such long-range bombardment has a nuisance value, but its military effects are hardly likely to be important. It would have to be a very heavy bombardment indeed, and one very long sustained, to drive, say, British troops from their positions on the Kent coast; and if Hitler is depending on his big guns at Calais to secure the Channel for his army of invasion he is likely to be disappointed.



Above is the upper part of a church at Dover wrecked by a German shell fired on August 22. In the remarkable photograph below, taken from the British coast during the bombardment, flashes from the German guns (right) can be seen, and (on the left) a parachute flare dropped by one of the British 'planes that showered bombs on the German gun emplacements. *Photos, Associated Press*



Hitler's Coast Guns Did Not Stop the Convoy



These unique photographs were taken on August 22 on board one of the escorting warships of the convoy which was the first to be shelled by the big guns on the French coast. The convoy is seen ploughing bravely on while a salvo of shells falls amidst it.

Alec McMallen (above), ship's carpenter of one of the vessels in the convoy, was contentedly smoking his pipe when he got to port. Right, the commander of an escort ship watches Nazi bombers overhead.

Directly an attack is imminent every man on the escorting warships is instantly at his action station. The gunner above was shaving when the call came, and did not even wait to wash the lather from his face. Right is Signalman K. Stone, who was busy all through the bombardment. *Photos, Central Press and Sport and General*

John Bull and Uncle Sam Keep Rolling Along!

The war is coming very near to America—so near that, with a speed and unanimity which would have been altogether out of the question only a few months ago, the U.S.A. is not only adding to her own defences but is abandoning her long-cherished and carefully-preserved isolation.

SITTING at his desk at the White House, President Roosevelt greeted the newspapermen on August 16 with his customary affability. Indeed, he made it clear that he was particularly glad to see them, because he had three announcements to make of very great importance, present and future.

When the pressmen were all attention the President announced in slow, carefully-chosen words that the United States Government had entered into conversations with the British Government with regard to the acquisition of naval and air bases for the defence of the Western Hemisphere, and especially of the Panama Canal.

This was indeed headline news, but the President had not finished. Mr. Roosevelt went on to say that, in addition to conferring with the British Government, his Government was carrying on conversations with the Canadian Government concerning the defence of America. Finally, he announced that, at the invitation of Mr. Churchill, military and naval officers of the U.S.A. were already in Britain as observers of the great battle now raging.

It was understood that a day or two before Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill had been in communication—presumably by way of the Transatlantic telephone—and had discussed the possibility of the U.S.A. leasing naval and air bases from Great Britain. The situation of the bases was not made public, but it was generally believed that the negotiations concerned Newfoundland, Bermuda, and that great chain of British islands composed of the Bahamas, Jamaica, Leeward and Windward Islands and Trinidad, and British Guiana on the mainland of South America. Bases established in any of these territories would supplement the present American naval and air bases in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Panama Canal zone, and would obviously constitute an immense reinforcement to the defences of the Panama Canal, perhaps the most vital of America's lines of communication.

In effect, the Caribbean Sea would be closed against unwelcome intruders—and on the subject of intrudersMr.Churchill and President Roosevelt may be relied upon to think alike. Only one non-American Power threatens the safety of the Canal and the integrity of some or all of the Latin-American republics, and that power is Nazi Germany.

On this map America's principal naval and air bases guarding the entrance to the Panama Canal are shown by crosses. The white circles indicate British possessions where the United States hopes to lease other bases.

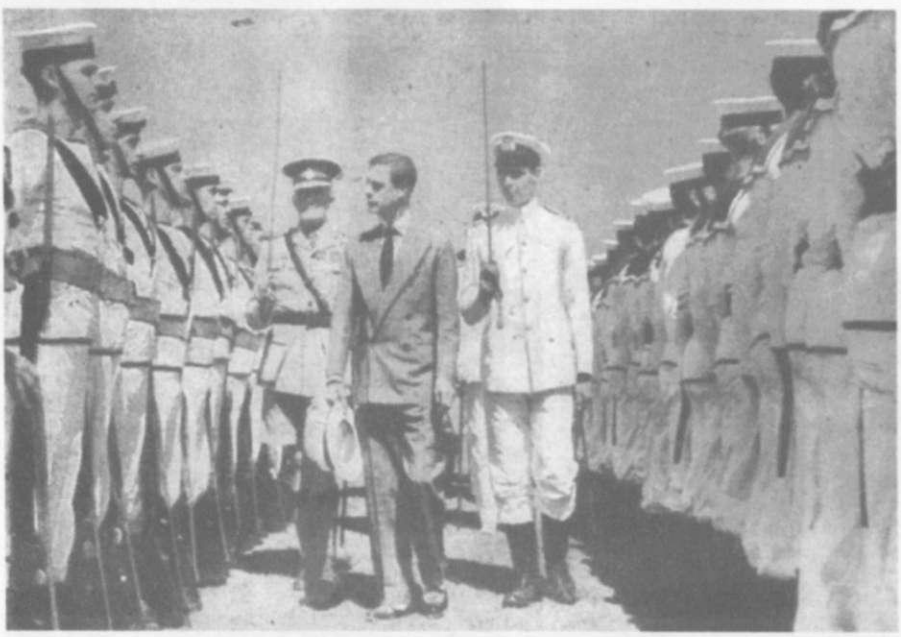
Courtesy of the "Daily Mail"

So much for the southern defences of the U.S.A. Turning now to the north, we see that vast undefended frontier—the longest undefended frontier in the world—which for nearly 3,000 miles separates the U.S.A. and Canada. America has no fear of Canadian aggression, just as Canada has no fear of American designs on her territory. But such is the range of modern aircraft that it is not outside the bounds of possibility that Hitler should attempt to establish air bases on the frozen shores of America's far north, as well as in Greenland and Iceland. It was with intense interest and considerable relief that Americans learnt that Canadian and British troops were holding Iceland against Hitler; and they greeted with a chorus of approval President Roosevelt's announcement that an arrangement was being negotiated with Canada whereby the U.S.A. would move troops to Canada whenever it might be necessary to repel a threat to the security of the one country or the other.

On August 17 President Roosevelt met Mr. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, at Ogdensburg on the American side of the St. Lawrence, and the meeting resulted in an agreement that a Permanent Joint Board on Defence should be set up to commence immediately studies relating to sea, land, and air problems. In a broad sense, the authorized statement declared, it would consider the defence of the northern half of the Western Hemisphere.

Two years before, when making his famous goodwill visit to Canada, President Roosevelt had made the declaration that "I give to you the assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire"; and two days later Premier Mackenzie King had said that "We, too, have our obligations as a good friendly neighbour, and one of them is to see that at our own instance our country is made as immune from attack or possible invasion as we can reasonably be expected to make it; and that, should the occasion ever arise, enemy forces should not be able to pursue their way by land, sea, or air to the United States across Canadian territory." Now the understanding and the resolve were carried a big step further. The U.S.A. made it as plain as could be that an attack on Canada would be an attack on the U.S.A., and would be resisted at once by the great republic with all her armed might.

Closely linked in the popular mind with the question of bases and the defence conversations with Canada—though the connexion was carefully disowned by President Roosevelt—was the suggestion that the U.S.A. should sell a number of out-of-date destroyers to Great Britain. In the matter of destroyers the U.S.A. Navy is the strongest



The assurance given by Lord Lloyd, Britain's Colonial Secretary, to the Bermuda House of Assembly in August 1940, that "there is no question of Bermuda, or any part of it, being separated from the British Empire," followed close upon a visit of the Duke of Windsor to the island on his way to the Bahamas. His Royal Highness is here seen inspecting a naval guard of honour on his arrival in Bermuda on August 8. *Photo, Planet News*

The Destroyers Are Ready—Will Britain Get Them?

Here, in this remarkable photograph of Philadelphia Dockyard, are some 130 of the American warships which were laid up after the last war. Nearly all are destroyers, of which it is hoped that at least 50 will be transferred to the British Navy. Most of these are of the same type, of about 1,100 tons, with a speed on trials of 35 knots.

Photo, Central Press

in the world, with its 237 destroyers actually built and 60 more on the stocks; but of the former, 167 are "obsolete," in the sense that they are more than 16 years old; in fact, they were built towards the end of the last war. For some time before the present war most of them had been lying in the American naval yards, but when war broke out in Europe President Roosevelt ordered that they should be reconditioned so that they could be employed on the neutrality patrol in the North Atlantic—"to watch what is going on," as the President put it.

On August 4, in a broadcast to the American nation, General Pershing, who was Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Force in 1917, urged that the United States should make available to Britain at least 50 of these over-age destroyers as part of its help in defending democracy and assisting the security of the U.S.A. If the destroyers so sent helped to save the British Fleet, then America herself might be saved from another war. "We shall be failing in our duty to America," he added, "if we do not do it."

The suggestion was taken up in many quarters, and it was generally believed that President Roosevelt himself strongly favoured it. As for his opponents of the Republican Party, Mr. Wendell Wilkie, in the speech accepting his nomination as Republican candidate for the Presidency, at least gave his tacit approval when he said that "We must honestly face our relationship with Great Britain. We must admit that the loss of the British Fleet would greatly weaken our defence. This is because the British Fleet has for years controlled the Atlantic, leaving us free to concentrate on the Pacific. If the British Fleet were lost or captured, the Atlantic might be dominated by Germany, a power hostile to our way of life, controlling in that event most of the ships and shipbuilding facilities in Europe. This would be a calamity for us. We might be exposed to attack on the Atlantic. Our defence would be weakened until we could build a navy and air force strong enough to defend both coasts."

Before the destroyers could be sold to Britain, however, it might be necessary to repeal a law passed in 1917 forbidding the sale of vessels constructed for the U.S.A. Navy, and perhaps special legislation would be involved. It was suggested that the destroyers might be transferred to Canada instead of to Britain direct, or that they might be disposed of to private firms as "scrap" on the understanding that they should be resold to Britain. Whatever the method adopted, the American public welcomed the idea that the destroyers should be made available for Britain, more particularly in view of Mr. Churchill's declaration to the Commons on August 20 that His Majesty's Government had informed the United States Government, "spontaneously, and without being asked or offered any inducement," that they were ready to place defence facilities at their disposal by leasing sites in our Transatlantic possessions.

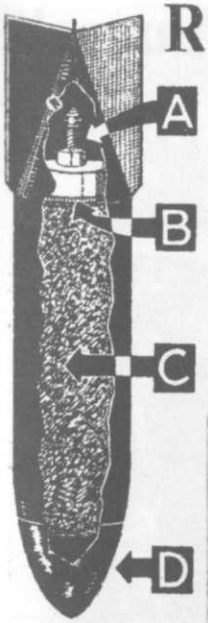
They welcomed it, in a word, as but one illustration of that working together which, to quote Mr. Churchill again, would cause America and Britain to become "somewhat mixed up together in some of their affairs for mutual and general advantage." With gladness in their hearts they heard him applaud the process of Anglo-American mingling. "Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll. Let it roll on full flood, inexorable, irresistible, benignant, to broader lands and better days."

Twenty Acres of Scrap Torn Down from the Sky

FROM August 8 to August 27 the total "bag" of enemy aircraft credited to the R.A.F. was over 1,000. Many of these fell on British soil, and as a result the Royal Air Force, as a side-line of its heroic exploits, made a generous contribution to the Minister of Supply's call for scrap metal. The photograph at the top of the page was taken at one of the big dumps covering no fewer than 20 acres. The great mass of twisted and broken metal is a veritable graveyard of the remains of Nazi fighters and bombers. They are worth thousands of pounds as scrap. First examined by technicians, who search for any new features of construction, workmen, who obviously enjoy their task, then break up the fuselage and engine for melting down. About 160 men are employed merely in piling up the lorry-loads of wrecks.

Photos, Associated Press and Topical

R.E.s Dig Up Time Bombs Like Potatoes!

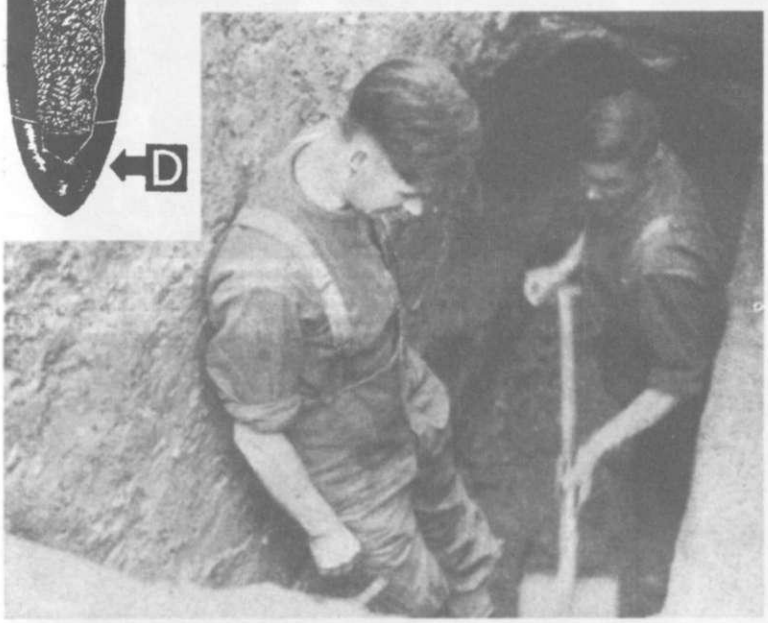


The Nazi air raids on Britain have the double purpose of attacking military objectives and spreading terror among the civilian population. For the latter the enemy has two new weapons—the "screaming" bomb and the delayed-action bomb. Many of the bombs fall deep into the earth and do not explode until hours or even days later. Some that fell in a London suburb on Friday, August 16, did not explode until the following Sunday morning. Therefore, in bombed districts everyone should avoid small holes in the ground and recently disturbed earth, for there may be a delayed-action bomb beneath.

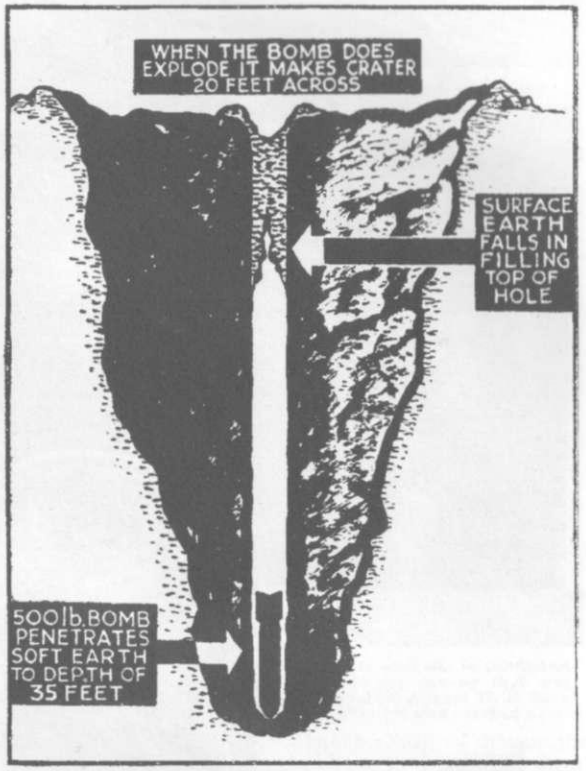
Time Bomb Diagrams:

A is the fuse in the tail; as soon as the bomb strikes the ground a trigger is released which allows acid to reach the metal plate, B. The acid gradually eats through the plate and eventually reaches the fuse, so firing the explosive, C. The bomb is fitted with an armour-piercing nose-cap, D. Right, a delayed-action bomb has got home. The deeper it penetrates into the earth, the greater the damage it does.

Diagrams courtesy of the "Daily Mail"



Here men of the Royal Engineers are digging on a spot where a delayed-action bomb is known to have fallen. They are now only just below the surface, but they will have to go much deeper and, as seen below, towards the end of the excavation the earth has to be taken out carefully and hoisted to the surface.

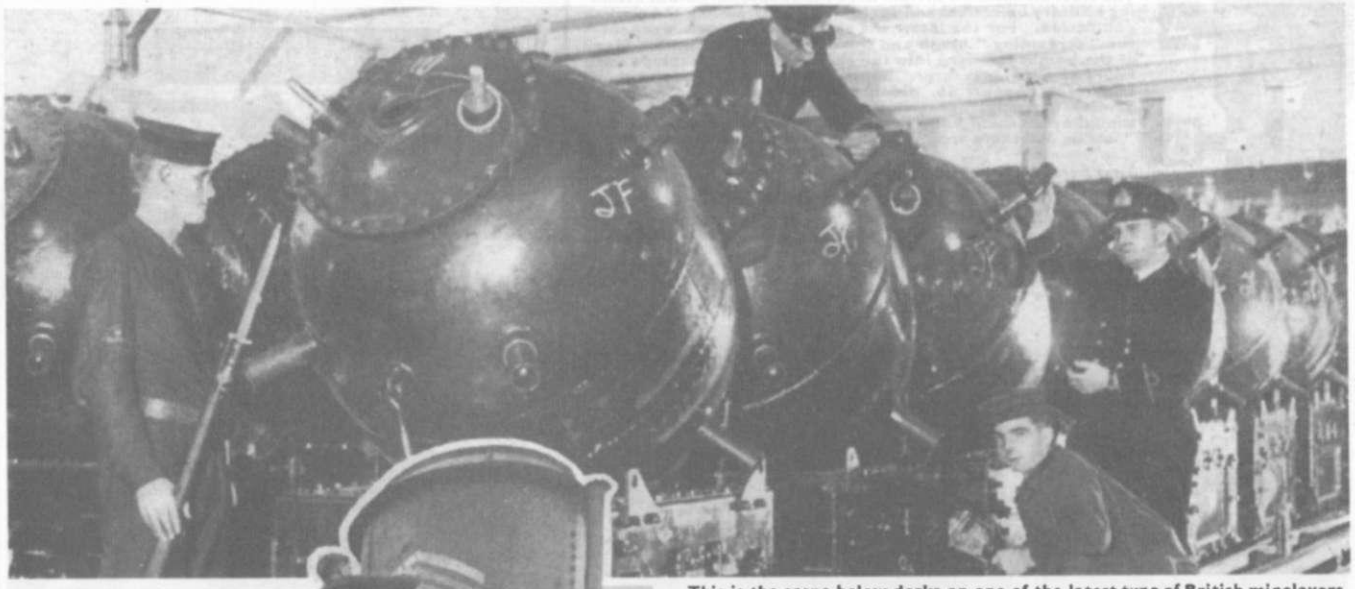

WHEN THE BOMB DOES EXPLODE IT MAKES CRATER 20 FEET ACROSS
SURFACE EARTH FALLS IN FILLING TOP OF HOLE
500lb. BOMB PENETRATES SOFT EARTH TO DEPTH OF 35 FEET

THE dangerous work of dealing with delayed-action bombs falls to the lot of the Royal Engineers, and in this page they are seen carrying out their life-saving work. There are two methods of rendering the bombs harmless, depending on the place in which they fall. If on open ground, well away from anything to which they might cause damage, they are exploded where they lie. When this is done they form craters as much as 20 feet in diameter. If, however, bombs fall close to buildings another method must obviously be used, so the bombs are dug out and carted away, to be exploded where they can do no harm. The work is carried out by the officer in command, after consulting with the local authorities, and the men have become so used to their dangerous task, and have learned so thoroughly the best method of dealing with each individual case, that they go about their work as calmly as if they were digging potatoes.

Above is a squad of the R.E. specially qualified to tackle delayed-action bombs; they have just dealt faithfully with another one, the latest of many. At times they may have to dig down as much as twenty feet before they find their quarry.

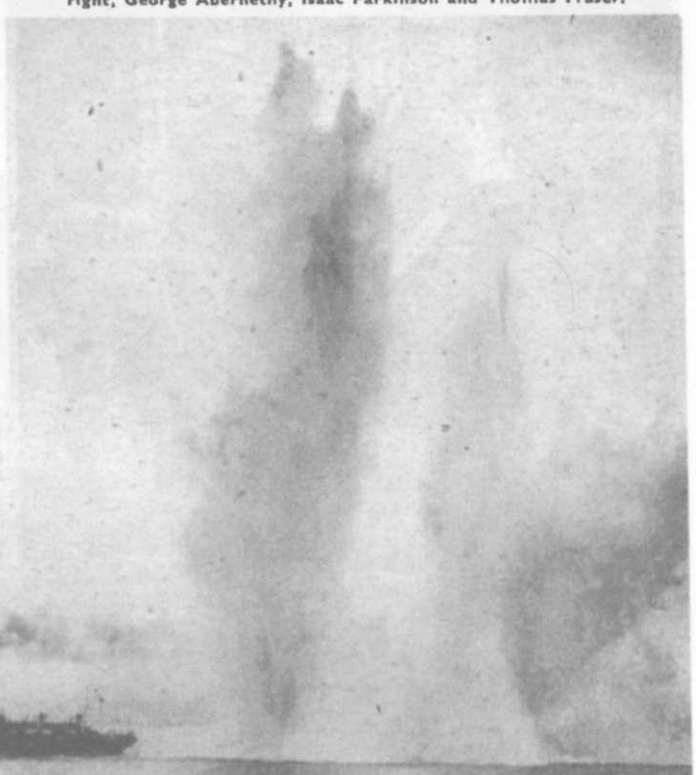
Photos, L.N.A.

More Chevrons for the Minesweepers' Funnels

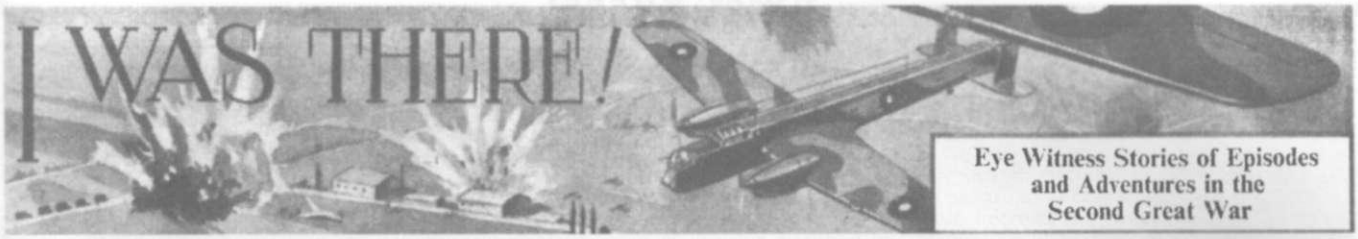


This is the scene below decks on one of the latest type of British minelayers preparing to put to sea and take part in laying a minefield. Officers and men are making final adjustments to the formidable cargo their ship carries.
Photo, Fox

These three skippers of minesweepers—which before the war were trawlers—were decorated by the King with the Distinguished Service Cross on June 10 for "unfailing courage and devotion to duty." They are, left to right, George Abernethy, Isaac Parkinson and Thomas Fraser.



These men of the minesweeping trawler "Cordella" are among the crews who paint chevrons on their ships' funnels to record the number of mines they have destroyed. Above, the ship's artist is at work on the fifth chevron. Right, a minesweeper has just earned another chevron, for the mine it has caught explodes harmlessly astern.
Photos, "Daily Mirror" and Associated Press



Sixty Shells Dropped Round My Ship

A new form of attack on shipping was begun on August 22, when German batteries on the French coast between Boulogne and Calais unsuccessfully shelled a convoy passing up the Channel. The following eye-witness stories of the attack were told by captains of ships in the convoy to Laurence Wilkinson, of the "Daily Express."

STEAMING up the Channel on August 22, Captain George Hunter had just commented to his chief engineer on their luck in having sailed round the coast for nearly a year of war without a scratch. Then suddenly there was a crash on the seaward side of the ship, and three great spouts of water shot in the air.

Describing the scene afterwards, Captain Hunt said:

We both looked, but nothing was said. I thought, "Have I spoken too soon?"

I looked out of the window on the bridge, but I could not see any aircraft. That seemed funny. What else could it have been but bombs?

It was all quiet for a bit. We were puzzled, but the convoy went on as though nothing had happened. Then, suddenly, "Wham! Swoosh!" And there were three more mountains of water shooting up—uncomfortably near.

After that it got a bit monotonous. The salvos of shells came over at almost regular intervals of five minutes.

I sent the chief engineer down below. I had a feeling that we were going to get a packet of trouble, and I thought it was no good both of us being killed.

He had not been down below more than a few minutes when the next salvo shook the ship. The bridge was awash with about a foot of water from the spouts. I got my ankles wet. There must have been a 'plane high up in the sky spotting for the Germans.

The naval vessels escorting us did a first-class job. They shepherded us through, telling us where and how to steam, and at what speed. To give us cover, they raced about us throwing out a smokescreen.

The shelling seemed to be coming from all the way along the coast between Boulogne and Calais. We could see the flashes of the guns, and in the seconds that followed we wondered if any one was going to get a packet.

Then we heard the whistle and the thud and saw the waterspouts.

In between salvos I rummaged around to collect any shell splinters I could find. I put some aside in a handkerchief. I thought the Admiralty might like to have a look at them and, anyway, they'll do as souvenirs.

The stuff they were throwing over was heavy, wicked stuff. I guessed they must have been from heavy guns.

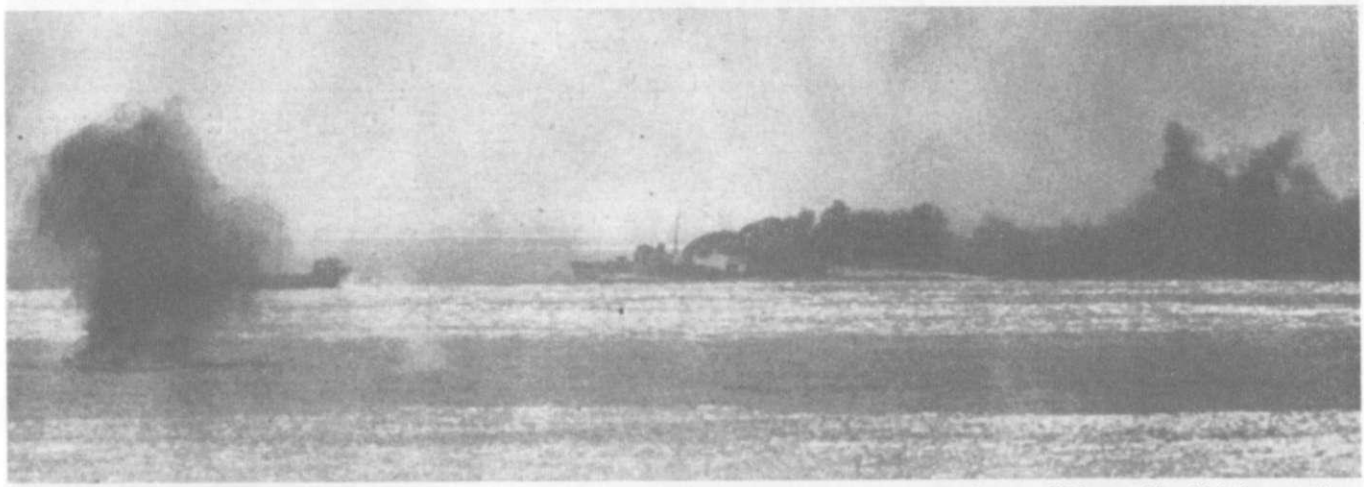
I thought, "I seem to be getting some-

Captain George Hunter who was in command of one of the ships in the convoy that was bombed in the Channel on August 22, is here seen on the bridge after his ship reached port.

This photograph gives some idea of the ordeal through which the convoy, of which Captain Hunter's ship formed part, passed. As the ships steamed up Channel on a perfect day through sunlit waters, the batteries on the French coast opened fire. The convoy turned as close in shore as possible, yet beneath the white cliffs of England shells still hailed upon them. That they should have escaped without loss was a heartening proof both of bad German marksmanship and good British seamanship.

Photos, Associated Press

I WAS THERE!



The escape of the convoy that was shelled from the French coast was in some measure due to the speed and great efficiency with which the escorting destroyers laid smoke screens and dropped smoke floats. Here, during the attack described by Captains Hunter and Storm in these pages, a destroyer is sending out a smoke screen which in a few minutes will make the whole convoy invisible both from the air and the sea.
Photo, Fox

body else's share," because time and again the salvos seemed to be coming near to me, and I nearly always got a throwback in the way of shrapnel. Other ships in the convoy seemed to be missing a good bit of the fun.

Quite sixty shells dropped around my ship. It was a nasty experience. Bombing from an aeroplane is not so bad, as I found out later in the day when bombers attacked us.

Before they had half done their job, our Spitfires came roaring down on to them, scattering them like dust. You never saw flying like it. Our fellows were marvellous. The Germans just took one look at them, and then seemed to vanish out of the sky.

A somewhat different view was held by the master of another ship in the convoy, Captain Archibald Storm, who said :

We were in the rear of the convoy and saw the first shells drop. A couple of them dropped into the sea between my ship and the shore, and then another couple came.

Some of the other ships probably never saw those four shells. I think they were just trial shots, so that the spotting 'plane could put the gunners on their target.

Nothing happened after that for about half an hour. We were still wondering what it was all about when the shelling started in earnest.

If it was intended for us it was well off the mark, though other skippers in the convoy may have had worse luck than me.

I took my ship through the first big convoy attack in the Channel—the attack which started at night with German E-boats firing torpedoes and raking us with machine-guns in the darkness, and ended up with a terrific bombing attack.

Compared with that, today's experience was not very frightening. It struck me as more of a try-out than a serious attack.

I Rescued An Airman In My Canoe

A gallant rescue was performed on August 14, 1940, by Miss Peggy Prince, who paddled a canoe some two miles out into the Channel and picked up one of the crew of an R.A.F. bomber. The next day, Miss Prince broadcast the story of her adventures, and it is given below in her own words.

At twenty to six on the morning of August 14 there was a terrific hammering on the door of the house, and we found a couple of soldiers, who had come to tell us that there was an aircraft down in the sea about two and a half miles out.

They came to our house because I have a ten-foot Canadian type canoe, about the only boat left in the neighbourhood. They asked if they could borrow the canoe to go out to rescue any of the survivors from the 'plane. They thought it was a German bomber. I didn't know these men or whether they could manage a canoe ; my canoe is only three feet wide and not so easy for a novice. So I asked them if they knew anything about canoes, and they didn't, so I said I'd go along.

We carried the canoe over three rolls of barbed wire, over a concrete wall and down a ladder to the beach. One of the soldiers said he was going to come with me, and I fitted him carefully into the canoe. He insisted on bringing his gun, in case there was any " funny " business, and so we set off.

By this time the aeroplane had sunk. She had sunk even before we got the canoe launched, and we'd been in such a hurry to get her down that I hadn't any time to take any bearings from the land. I tried to steer for a buoy which seemed to be near the spot. When we got out near the buoy I stood up, but I couldn't see anything at all, and the canoe was leaking, so I turned back.

When we got back to land there were quite a lot of people, and they told me that there were three people in the sea, swimming a little bit farther than the point we had reached. So I set out again, but this time I left the soldier behind. It was about a couple of miles I had to go, and this time one of our Hurricanes flew over me and led me to the place, where I picked up a sergeant of the R.A.F. A motor fishing boat had come out and was picking up the other two.

I have no idea how the sergeant got into the canoe without overturning it. He had swum to the buoy for which I had been making, and I tried to hold the canoe steady while he climbed in ; but he was very exhausted. I wrapped my coat around him and paddled back. On the second journey out it was a bit of a race, between me and the fishing-boat, but I was determined to get one of the men after having been out once already. The sergeant told me afterwards that, when he saw the canoe coming, he made up his mind that he would be rescued by the canoe, so he submerged to keep out of the way of the fishing-boat.

There were well over a score of people waiting on the wall when we got back, and the odd thing was that only one of them, the police-sergeant, moved to help me get the canoe out of the water. And nobody in that crowd had sufficient presence of mind to offer me a coat, although all I had on was my pyjamas, and they were soaking wet !

Miss Peggy Prince is here seen standing beside the small clinker-built canoe with which she effected the rescue described in this page
Photo, " Daily Mirror "

I WAS THERE!

We Ran Into a German Balloon Barrage

Some fighter pilots' experiences have already been told in this series (see pages 165 and 191). The contrasting dangers and difficulties of the R.A.F. bomber squadrons are vividly described in the following account of some exciting incidents during night raids over Germany during the month of August.

A TWENTY-THREE-YEAR-OLD pilot in a heavy bomber squadron, broadcasting an account of some of his experiences on August 14, said:

We had a bit of excitement a few nights back when we ran slap into the middle of a German balloon barrage. Our luck was in. Not only did we get away with it, but we brought one of the balloons down.

Our target that night was a synthetic oil plant at a place called Gelsenkirchen, which is in the middle of the Ruhr. It was a dark night—very dark—and we had come down to about six thousand feet to find the target. We dropped our flares and located and bombed the works, then we climbed and went back to see what results we'd had. My second pilot was flying the 'plane. I'd been down in the bomb-aimer's position, which is in the nose of the aircraft, doing the bombing.

Suddenly I saw a long dark shape silhouetted against the clouds, then, as the searchlights played across them, I saw three more, about a hundred yards away. By now I'd gone up from the bomb-aimer's position and was standing beside the second pilot. I gave instructions to the gunners to open fire at the balloons, and we started to turn away to starboard to get away from them. Immediately afterwards the second pilot threw the aircraft into a very steep right-hand turn, for he'd seen another balloon coming straight up in front of him. It had loomed up out of the darkness dead ahead and our wing tip just caught the fabric. If the pilot hadn't yanked the aircraft over quickly we should have flown right into it, the envelope would have wrapped itself round the 'plane, and that would have been the end of the trip. But all that happened was that the aircraft bucked a bit; then there was a terrific explosion which we could hear even above the roar of the engines and I imagine the Germans were minus one balloon, though we couldn't see what happened.

When we climbed up higher we found we'd been flying along a row of balloons, right in the thick of them. It was pretty amazing that we hadn't hit a few more, for when we'd been bombing we must have been all among the cables.

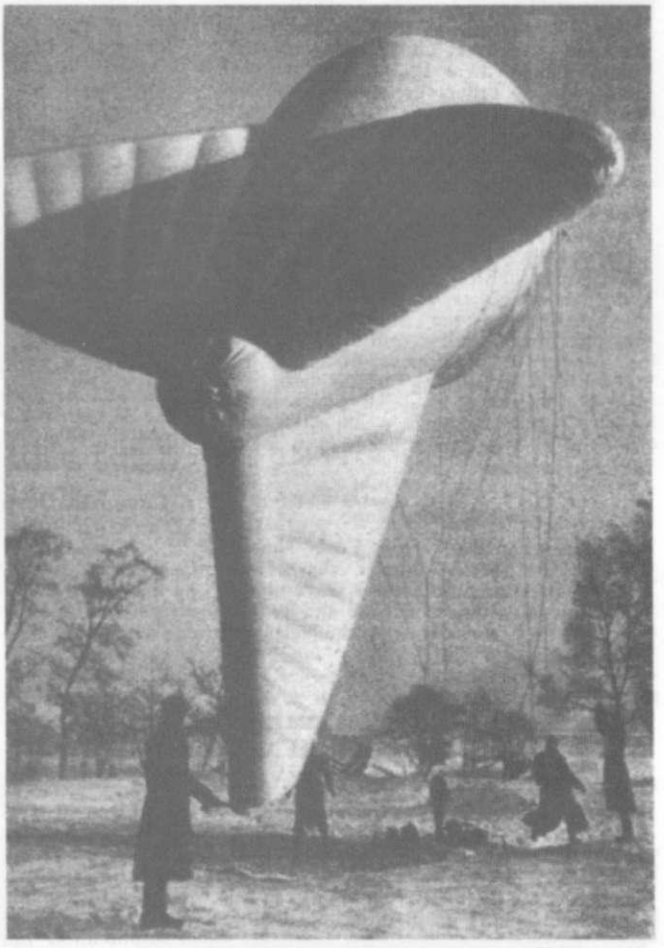
Another raid which I shan't forget in a hurry happened just before this balloon incident. On this occasion we were bombing the railway marshalling yards at Hamm. There's an important railway traffic centre here, and it seems to be selected as a target most nights in the week. When we took off the weather was pretty poor, and at seven thousand feet it was freezing. Over the North Sea we struck heavy banks of cloud. I climbed to fourteen thousand feet, but even at that height we couldn't get out of it—so we just carried on flying through cloud. When we were about fifteen minutes away from our target, the port engine began to splutter and the engine revolutions dropped. I realized that we'd probably got ice in the carburettor. Then the starboard engine spluttered, and soon both engines ceased to give any power at all. Our air-speed indicator packed up, so did the altimeter. We didn't know whether we had flying speed or how high we were.

The second pilot and I were flying the machine between us while he was fixing the warm air control which had become disengaged. This is an arrangement by which the air, instead of being sucked straight in, is warmed up by the heat of the engine before being passed through to the carburettor. He'd got both his hands on the warm air lever, forcing it down as far as it would go, and he'd got his feet on the rudders, while I grabbed the stick, keeping the aircraft on an even keel. I could tell by the feel of it that we were going down very quickly. The wings had a thick layer of ice on them, and one couldn't see through the windscreen because that too was covered in ice. It didn't matter very much about that, because it was so dark and we were still in cloud. I decided that if the engines didn't come on within another four or five seconds, I'd give the order to abandon the aircraft. I'd got the words on the tip of my tongue, when the port engine spluttered a couple of times and began to pick up again.

It would still have been impossible to maintain height with the amount of ice we had on the aircraft, but I decided to hang on a little longer before giving the order to bale out. The starboard engine picked up, and after a bit more spluttering, both engines started working normally again.

We flew on for another half-minute or so, and then the altimeter started registering. I looked at the height and found it was approximately four thousand feet, which meant we'd come down in a dive about eleven thousand feet.

We were just recovering from this when we ran into an electrical storm. The effect was so weird that I began to wonder whether we hadn't arrived in another world. Everything seemed outlined in a blue haze. The propellors made shining spinning circles. The two guns in the front turret were pointing up in the air and there was the same blue haze round them, too. The front gunner reported that there were sparks jumping from one gun to another; the rear gunner afterwards said that for a minute he thought his guns were actually firing and he couldn't understand it. As I looked at the second pilot's face, I saw that it was ringed with blue. The tips of his fingers had the same blue haze round them. It covered the instrument panel and ran along the leading edges of the wings. That lasted about two minutes, and was one of the weirdest experiences I have ever had.



The Germans place great confidence in their balloon barrage. Here is one of them ready to take the air. The crew waits for the order to send it up.
Photo, Wide World

Members of a Nazi barrage crew maintain a vigilant watch as a balloon ascends above oil refineries "somewhere in Germany."
Photo, Wide World

We flew on and arrived over our target area. The cloud was still so heavy that it was impossible to locate the marshalling yards, so we turned and came back, and on the way we bombed the alternative military target which had been allotted to us. Three fighters picked us up near Rotterdam. First of all the rear gunner reported one enemy aircraft apparently trailing us, then he was joined by a couple of his pals. The gunner got all ready for a bit of a scrap, but they didn't attack and we arrived back at the base without further incident.

OUR SEARCHLIGHT ON THE WAR

French Ships to be Demobilized

After France surrendered there arose problems concerning the future of three French naval vessels—the aircraft carrier "Béarn," the cruiser "Emile Bertin," and the training cruiser "Jeanne D'Arc"—which were in Western Hemisphere waters at Martinique and Guadeloupe. Discussions took place between the U.S. Administration, the French Embassy in Washington, the Consulate at Martinique, and the French Commander of the "Emile Bertin," who felt that he must obey orders and return to France, even at the cost of fighting. Agreement was reached, and the three French ships are to be decommissioned. There remains the problem of the 100 American 'planes aboard the "Béarn." Britain claims them because she assumed liability for all orders of the Anglo-French Purchasing Commission. At any rate, they are out of Hitler's reach.

Bigger and Better Bombers

Twice as powerful as those at present in use and carrying far greater bomb loads, bristling with gun positions, very fast, gigantic in size yet easy to handle and manoeuvre—such is the verdict of pilots who have tested the new secret British bombers shortly coming into service against the enemy. In addition to this impressive new model, the Wellington has been provided with a new type of engine, similar to that fitted to fighter machines, which enables the former speed of 260 miles per hour to be considerably exceeded.

Twisting the Rope

According to the "New York Times" Marshal Pétain admits that Hitler is putting pressure on the Vichy Government. "The Germans hold the rope and twist it whenever they consider that the accord is not being carried out." Every day brings new evidence of the arch-bully's policy. On August 21 a decree was issued by General Weygand dismissing 180 French Army commanders who had taken part in operations against the Germans. The following day, General de Gaulle, announced that "800 aeroplanes, supremely essential for the defence of France in Africa, are leaving Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia for Istres, there to be placed at the disposition of the enemy." Squads of the Gestapo now at Marseilles give orders conflicting with those issued from Vichy. Some 50,000 Germans from the Ruhr and Rhineland have arrived in the French capital in order to be out of reach of R.A.F. bombing raids. So proceeds the "honourable peace as between soldiers" foretold by Marshal Pétain.

Commander Ben Bryant of the "Sealion," leaving his submarine with his First Lieut., John Bromage, on their return to harbour after desperate adventures in Norwegian waters.

Canadian Destroyer to the Rescue

When the "Arandora Star," en route to Canada with many hundreds of German and Italian internees, was torpedoed by a U-boat on July 2, 1940, the Canadian destroyer "St. Laurent" (Commander H. G. de Wolf, R.C.N.) was 84 sea miles away. She covered the distance in under three hours, and, guided by a Sunderland flying-boat to where the survivors were crowded in lifeboats or clinging to wreckage, engaged in the work of rescue until the flying-boat reported that no more survivors were in sight. Then with more than 850 survivors on board the "St. Laurent" set course for a Scottish port, where she arrived 17 hours later—at 6.30 a.m. on July 3. The 850 survivors were crammed in somehow, and on their way to safety were given a breakfast of porridge and one egg each. Cocoa and soup were also provided, and those people who looked as if they needed it were given a tot of rum.

'Sealion' Survives Depth Charges

When the British submarine "Sealion" (*see* Vol. II, pp. 462 and 504) returned to her base in August 1940, Commander B. Bryant had a thrilling story to tell. When off the Norwegian coast the "Sealion" was about to torpedo a 9,000-ton German merchantman. Suddenly the convoy of which she was a part changed course and one ship came straight for the submarine. There was a grinding, crashing shock as "Sealion's" periscope and hull were struck a glancing blow. Then came an hour of depth charging, but the little vessel survived it all. After a time she was surfaced and her crew found the heavy metal masts and the periscope shafts swinging wildly. All through the night they worked to make fast the wreckage, but perhaps the most hazardous job fell to Chief Petty Officer R. Clark, who fitted up an emergency wireless aerial.

'Criminals Trained for Murder'

The arming of the Home Guard with rifles provoked violent attacks in the Nazi press and on the Berlin radio. "The British Government is releasing criminals from prison and training them for murder," said the announcer bitterly. "Every Englishman who agrees to act as a franc-tireur is digging his own grave. Churchill is leading the British civil population on a fatal path." How much more will be resented the decision to equip certain units of the Home Guard with light machine-guns purchased in America, with millions of rounds of ammunition.

V.C. OF A BROKEN BRIDGE

2nd. Lieut. R. W. Annand

The Victoria Cross has been awarded to 2nd Lieut. R. W. Annand, Durham Light Infantry, for most conspicuous gallantry on May 13-16, 1940, when the platoon under his command was on the south side of the River Dyle, astride a blown bridge. During the night a strong attack was beaten off, but about 11 a.m. the enemy again launched a violent attack and pushed forward a bridging party into the sunken bottom of the river; 2nd Lieut. Annand attacked this party, but when ammunition ran out he went forward himself over open ground, with total disregard for enemy mortar and machine-gun fire. Reaching the top of the bridge, he drove out the party below, inflicting over 20 casualties with hand grenades. Having been wounded, he rejoined his platoon, had his wound dressed, and then carried on in command. During the evening another attack was launched, and again 2nd Lieut. Annand went forward with hand grenades and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. When the order to withdraw was received he withdrew his platoon, but learning on the way back that his batman was wounded and had been left behind, he returned at once to the former position and brought him back in a wheelbarrow before losing consciousness as the result of wounds.

2nd Lieut. R. W. Annand was on the Supplementary Reserve of the Durham Light Infantry at the outbreak of war. Before joining the Army in 1937 he was a Sub.-Lieut. in the R.N.V.R.

V.C. WON IN BELGIUM

Coy. Sergeant-Major G. Gristock

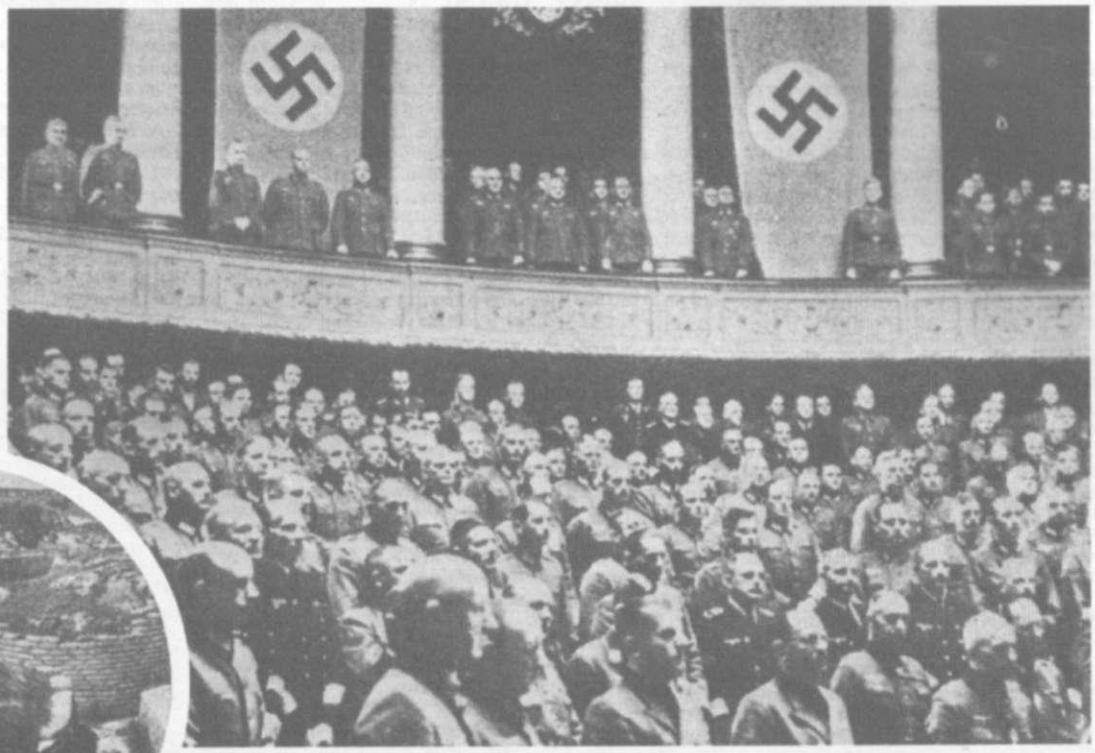
C.S.M. Gristock, of the Norfolk Regiment, was awarded the V.C. for most conspicuous gallantry on May 21, 1940, when his company was holding a position on the line of the River Escaut, south of Tournai. After a prolonged attack, the enemy succeeded in breaking through beyond the company's right flank, which was consequently threatened. Coy. Sergeant-Major Gristock, having organized a party of eight riflemen from company headquarters, went forward to cover the right flank. Realizing that an enemy machine-gun had moved forward to a position from which it was inflicting heavy casualties on his company, C.S.M. Gristock went on, with one man as connecting file, to try to put it out of action. While advancing, he came under heavy machine-gun fire from the opposite bank, and was severely wounded in both legs, his right knee being badly smashed. He nevertheless gained his fire-position, some 20 yards from the enemy machine-gun post, undetected, and by well-aimed rapid fire killed the machine-gun crew of four and put their gun out of action. He then dragged himself back to the right flank position, from which he refused to be evacuated until contact with the battalion on the right had been established and the line once more made good. He has since died from his wounds.

C.S.M. Gristock was 34. He entered the Army at the age of 14 as a band boy in the Queen's Bays. Later he transferred to the Norfolks. His V.C. was the first won for that regiment.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; and "Daily Mirror"

More Drops of Bitterness in France's Cup

One more humiliation was suffered by France when the Chamber of Deputies, once her stronghold of freedom, was hung with swastika banners and filled with officials of the Nazi-governed city assembled to hear Hitler's "Appeal to reason" speech, relayed from the Reichstag on July 19. In the circle below a Nazi soldier wanders among the trenches at Vimy Ridge, which, with the sandbags filled with concrete, were preserved as a lasting memorial of the heroism shown there in the last war.



The puppet French Government at Vichy celebrated July 14, France's great day for asserting her claim to "liberty, equality and fraternity," with a military parade which was but a mockery of the country's faith. Above is the scene at the march past of troops. Centre, in white gloves, is Pétain; on his right is Weygand, and on the extreme left, Laval.

Many of the people of Brussels can remember the German occupation of their city in the last war, and they are not greatly upset by the company of German soldiers, who are often seen reading the Nazi war publication "West Front" outside the cafés.

Left, German soldiers are walking in front of hangars at Le Bourget, the great airport of Paris — one of many fine French aerodromes which have come into the hands of the Nazis but are receiving constant attention from the R.A.F.

Photos, Wide World and Keystone

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 1940 *354th day*

In the Air—R.A.F. Coastal Command aircraft, after attacking two enemy ships in North Sea, engaged seven escort Messerschmitts and shot one down. British machine damaged but landed safely.

Daylight attacks made on enemy aerodromes. Night raids on oil refineries at Magdeburg and Hanover; on aerodromes at Caen, Abbeville and Quakenbrueck, near Hanover; on island of Texel; and key railway centres in the Ruhr and Rhineland.

War against Italy—R.A.F. raided Sidi el Tmimi, seriously damaging three Italian aircraft and seaplane jetty at Bomba.

Reported that South African Air Force had made bombing expedition from Mega, Western Abyssinia, to Indian Ocean, raiding all enemy aerodromes, Mega wireless station, and other targets.

Home Front—Enemy made short raids by single aircraft on British coasts. Damage to one aerodrome, a Yorks town and a residential district on South Coast. Aerial torpedo wrecked eight cottages in S.E. town. Thirteen raiders destroyed; one British fighter lost, but pilot safe.

Balkans—Rumanian Government agreed to cede Southern Dobruja to Bulgaria.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22 *355th day*

On the Sea—German guns mounted near Calais and Boulogne bombarded convoy in Straits of Dover, but without result. Convoy was also attacked from air, but no ship hit. One raider destroyed, the 1,000th brought down round British coasts since June 16.

Air attack made on British convoy off N.E. Coast. Bombers driven off by escorting vessels and Spitfires.

In the Air—R.A.F. made heavy sustained attacks on German gun positions along French coast.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23 *356th day*

On the Sea—Enemy raider reported at large in Tasman Sea, having attacked British steamer "Turakina" on August 20.

Canadian cargo steamer "Geraldine Mary" reported sunk by enemy action off Irish coast.

British ship "Havildar" torpedoed off north coast of Ireland.

In the Air—R.A.F. made further heavy attacks on German gun emplacements near Gris Nez.

During night British bombers raided twenty aerodromes and seaplane bases in France and Holland, railway sidings at Mannheim and objectives in the Ruhr.

War against Italy—Italians reported to have reoccupied site of Fort Capuzzo.

Home Front—Enemy aircraft over London in early hours of morning. Many bombs dropped, but damage done comparatively slight. Two cinemas and a church hit. During day and evening raiders operated singly in widely separated areas, including London. Machine-gun attacks in Midlands. Residential areas in S.E. bombed, and damage done to N.E. coastal town. Enemy lost four machines, Britain none.

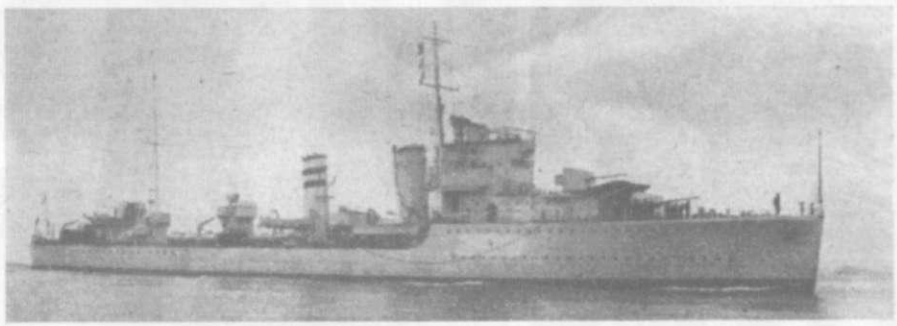
SATURDAY, AUGUST 24 *357th day*

On the Sea—H.M. trawler "Arctic Trapper" shot down two Nazi 'planes which had attacked her.

H.M. minesweeping trawler "Resparko" reported sunk as result of air attack.

In the Air—R.A.F. made hour-long bombing raid on Daimler Benz plant at Stuttgart, and also attacked nitrogen plant at Ludwigshafen, synthetic oil plant at Frankfurt and power station near Cologne.

German long-range gun positions again bombed. Further attacks also made on 20 aerodromes in occupied territory.



H.M.S. "Hostile" was sunk by an enemy mine on August 26. With four sister ships she took part in the gallant attack on German destroyers in Narvik Bay on April 10 and was damaged as a result of the action. H.M.S. "Hostile" belonged to the "Hero" class; her displacement was 1,340 tons with a speed of 36 knots. She carried a complement of 145.

Bomber squadrons made night raids on many targets in Germany, including aircraft factory at Frankfurt and power station near Cologne. Attacks also made on 22 aerodromes in Germany and occupied territory.

War against Italy—Reported that R.A.F. had bombed many targets in Libya on August 20, including Tobruk harbour, and landing-grounds at Tobruk and El Adem.

R.A.F. raided Bomba roadsteads in Libya, sinking two submarines, a destroyer and a submarine depot ship. Successful attack made on landing-ground at Derna.

Alexandria raided, but damage slight.

Home Front—During evening German long-range guns shelled Dover area. Some damage to buildings and a number of casualties. British land guns shelled France.

Single raiders reported over wide area of England and Wales. Ten shot down. Four British fighters lost, but two pilots safe.

Greece—Announced in Athens that British Navy and Air Force would aid Greece in event of an attack.

War against Italy—R.A.F. bombers attacked industrial targets in N.W. Italy.

During the night of August 23-24 British naval forces penetrated into the harbour of Bardia, Libya, and engaged targets at point-blank range; the seaplane base at Bomba was also bombarded.

Home Front—Resumption of mass bombing raids on England. In afternoon came two waves, one of 300, the other of 500 bombers with escorting fighters,

Two attempts to reach London beaten back, but in a third, at 11.30 p.m., some bombs were dropped. Portsmouth raided; Ramsgate gas works hit and Manston aerodrome damaged. Dover again shelled from French coast and later bombed from air, but suffered only slightly. Fierce air battles fought above the Straits.

Fifty-two raiders shot down. Nineteen British fighters lost, but 12 pilots safe.

Balkans—Rumano-Hungarian negotiations on Transylvanian question broke down.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25 *358th day*

On the Sea—Reported that H.M. submarine "Sealion" had returned to her base after voyage in which she sank an enemy supply ship, chased a U-boat, and was rammed while attacking a convoy.

In the Air—R.A.F. attacked big armament works and other targets in Berlin area. Enemy aerodromes in Holland, Belgium and Northern France also raided.

Coastal Command flying-boat attacked enemy flying-boats in Tromso area of Norway, sinking two and damaging others.

Home Front—Fifty-five German 'planes brought down during mass attacks on Britain, 43 being destroyed in fierce battle off Portland. Thirteen R.A.F. machines missing, but pilots of four safe. Two bombs dropped on Scilly Isles. London again raided during night. St Giles, Cripplegate, and other buildings in City area damaged.

MONDAY, AUGUST 26 *359th day*

On the Sea—Admiralty announced that H.M. Destroyer "Hostile" had been sunk by enemy mine.

In the Air—R.A.F. bombers made daylight and night attacks on twenty-seven aerodromes in Germany, Holland, Belgium and occupied France. During the night strong attacks were made on the synthetic oil plant at Leuna and the oil depot at Frankfurt. Aircraft factory at Frankfurt, explosives factory at Griesheim, and various objectives at Hoechst, Cologne, Leipzig, Hamm and Schwerte heavily bombed.

War against Italy—During night of August 26-27 R.A.F. bombers attacked Fiat works at Turin and other factories near Milan.

Announced from Cairo that R.A.F. had raided military objectives in Mogadishu, Italian Somaliland, and the airfield of Dessie in Abyssinia; Galabat, Metema, Bardia and El Adem also attacked.

Home Front—Three main mass attacks made on Britain, ending with 6-hour raid alarm in London during night. 'Planes approached the capital one or two at a time, but few bombs were dropped; one enemy bomber shot down by anti-aircraft fire. Great battle over Thames estuary.

Folkestone raided about noon by strong force of bombers and fighters. Large number of bombs dropped and damage done to private property. This raid followed by fierce engagement over Dover and Straits.

Two towns in Midlands attacked during the night, fires being caused and damage done to industrial property.

Scilly Isles again raided. First German raid on Eire. Four villages in Co. Wexford bombed.

Forty-seven raiders destroyed. Fifteen British fighters lost but pilots of 11 safe.

General—Governor of the Territory of the Chad, French Equatorial Africa, announced that it refused to accept capitulation and would continue to fight on side of Britain.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 27 *360th day*

On the Sea—Admiralty announced that H.M. Submarine "Spearfish," considerably overdue, must be presumed lost.

In the Air—R.A.F. bombed docks at Kiel and Wilhelmshafen, Messerschmitt factory at Augsburg, oil tanks and supply depots at Mannheim, and several aerodromes. Oil tanks near Bordeaux, near Brest and at Cherbourg also attacked.

War against Italy—R.A.F. bombed Fiat works at Turin and Marelli magneto factory at Sesto Saiovannni.

R.A.F. raided Harar and Dessie, Abyssinia.

Enemy attacked Haifa, but damage was negligible and casualties few.

Home Front—Enemy air activity slight during the day; three enemy aircraft shot down. During the night widely dispersed attacks over Britain, including London.

Balkans—Axis Powers reported to be intervening in Transylvanian dispute.